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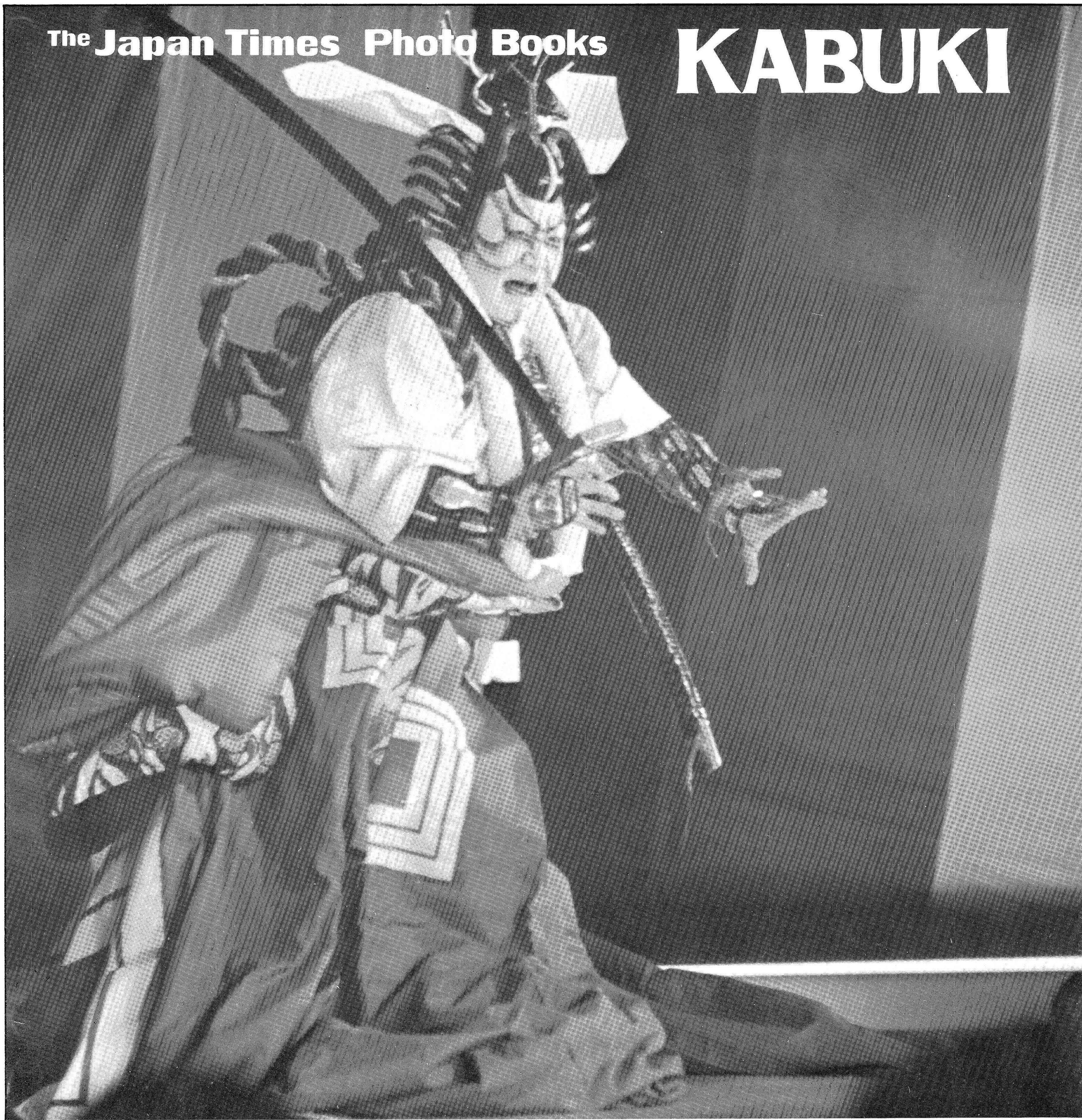
Japan Illustrated

The Japan Times
QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

1976—the Year Of the Dragon

Winter 1976
Vol. 14·No. 1







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JAPAN GREETS THE DRAGON YEAR

By TAMOTSU OGATA

Shown here is the reverse side of a bronze mirror with intricate images of dragons. One of the treasures housed in the Shosoin Repository in Nara, the mirror is 32 centimeters in diameter and is believed to have been made in the 8th Century.





In this drawing, a dragon is shown escorting a sailboat plowing through rough seas. The scene appears in the Kegon Engi Emaki, a set of 13th Century picture scrolls depicting the high points in the life of a Korean priest who founded the Kegon Sect of Buddhism. The scrolls, designated as national treasure for their historical and artistic value, are owned by Kozanji Temple in Kyoto.

THE year 1976 is the year of the Dragon in Japan. The mythological animal will thus be very much in evidence this year, especially during the New Year holidays.

Millions of New Year's Day greeting cards will carry drawings and block prints featuring the dragon and a variety of folk toys representing the fierce-looking creature will be found on toy counters.

The Dragon is the fifth of the 12 zodiac signs which were introduced into Japan from China in the early years of its intercourse with the Continent around the 7th Century. The duodecimal system, originally used to tell the months of the year and the hours of the day, became identified with the names of 12 animals in later years.

The zodiac signs include the Rat, Ox, Tiger, Hare, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Cock, Dog and Wild Boar, in that order. In Japanese they are known, respectively, as Ne, Ushi, Tora, U, Tatsu, Mi, Uma, Hitsuji, Saru, Tori, Inu and I.

Just as personalities of people in the West are said to accord with the Occidental zodiacal signs under which they are born, the Japanese oracles define personal traits according to the years of the individuals' birth. In most cases, the characterization harmonizes with the impressions one gains from the respective animals.

Thus the persons born in the year of the Dragon are considered upright and high-spirited. They are respected by others, have very settled ideas but are sometimes too forthright and impatient. They are thus supposed to be quite different in character from those born in the years of other meek animals such as the Rat, Sheep and Hare, who are characterized, respectively, as being amiable, modest and popular.

This year, the Dragon people are 12, 24, 36, 48, 60, 72, 84 or 96 years old, having been born, respectively, in 1964, 1952, 1940, 1928, 1916, 1904, 1892 or 1880.

Ask any Japanese in what zodiacal year he or she was born and you will get a prompt reply — except from some women who prefer to be noncommittal for reasons of their own. Incidentally, some Japanese policemen put this question casually to a criminal suspect before starting interrogation because this is the surest way of thwarting the suspected wrongdoer's attempt to quibble about his age and, hopefully, hide his identity.

Despite, or perhaps because of, its purely imaginary nature, the dragon has been very much a part of the Japanese arts and folklore from ancient times. It has been depicted as a large, four-legged creature with a snake's body, a camel's head, a deer's antlers, a demon's eyes and an ox's ears. Its cloven hoofs are tipped with sharp claws like a hawk's and its body is supposed to be covered with hard scales.

In Japanese mythology, the dragon is worshipped as the god of water, who resides in a palace at the bottom of the sea. The sea god belief had long been held by *ama* — the women who earned their living by collecting sea shells and seaweed from the seabed. Today, however, their latter-day sisters are seen plying their trade only at pearl farms — and that mostly for exhibition purposes.

There are many myths and legends about the dragon throughout Japan because the monster serpent has been revered as a deity in control of the clouds and rainfall — a matter of serious concern for the peasants who constituted the bulk of the Japanese population until the advent of the modern age in the latter part of the 19th Century.

THE Japanese people also used the 12 zodiacal signs to designate the directions and the hours of the day as well.

For instance, the Dragon represented east-southeast and 8 a.m. The other 11 signs stood for the following: the Rat (north, midnight); the Ox (north-northeast, 2 a.m.); the Tiger (east-northeast, 4 a.m.); the Hare (east, 6 a.m.); the Snake (south-southeast, 10 a.m.); the Horse (south, noon); the Sheep (south-southwest, 2 p.m.); the Monkey (west-southwast, 4 p.m.); the Cock (west, 6 p.m.); the Dog (west-northwest, 8 p.m.); the Wild Boar (north-northwest, 10 p.m.) northwest, 10 p.m.)

Today, the signs are used for indicating only the four directions — northeast, southeast, southwest and northwest, indicated, respectively, by the combinations of two zodiac signs — Ushi-Tora, Tatsu-Mi, Hitsuji-Saru and Inu-I. This system is used and understood only in rural districts and, even there, only by older people.

The dragon appears in a variety of forms ranging from simple folk toys to elaborate sculptures in Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines. Many foreign tourists have their first encounter with the Japanese dragon when they visit the Toshogu Shrine in Nikko. There, they will see a cluster of dragon head sculptures among the many colorful carvings decorating the shrine's main gate. Farther incide the shrine precincts, the visitor will see a pair of large bronze sculptures of the mythical creature atop the Chinese Gate, presumably placed there in the hope of invoking the dragon's reputed magical power of dispensing water in case of fire.

The dragon's conceptual association with water is illustrated in the frequent use of its head as the spout of fountains. An apt example is the bronze fountain placed in the compounds of the Horyuji Monastery in Nara. The Toshogu Shrine also has a few fountain spouts cast in the image of the dragon.

The dragon often serves as a motif of India ink drawings on sliding paper doors, folding screens and picture scrolls. It is also represented as exquisite ornaments for *samurai* swords, drums and masks. Some ancient bronze mirrors carry dragon designs cast on their backs.

In more popular, contemporary forms, the dragon provides the motif for drawings on kites.

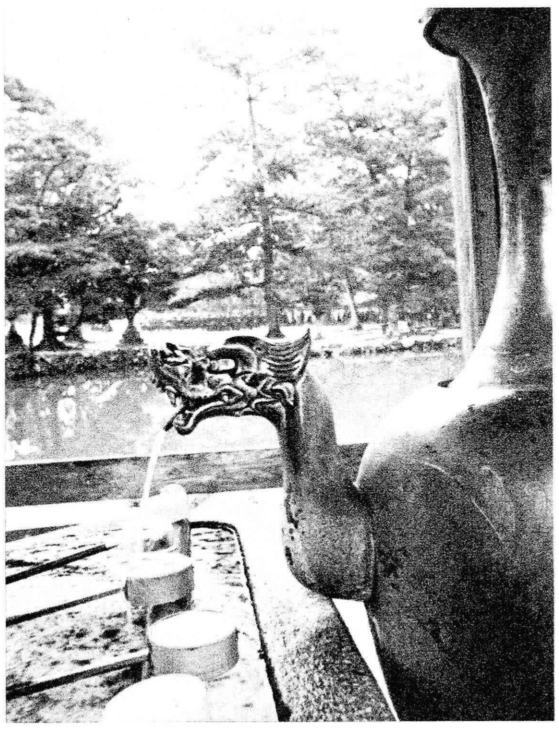
Sometimes, the Chinese ideogram representing the dragon (*ryu*) is substituted. The dragon is also a popular theme for tattoo designs. Some Shinto shrines feature dragon dances for their annual festivals. In this performance, a dozen or so parishioners, each carrying a stick, hoist a large image of the dragon made of cloth and dance about, presenting an illusion of a huge dragon snaking along over the waves and clouds.

The dragon tradition is old and universal. In the West it dates back to the Babylonian days and appears in Greek, Norse, German and early English legend. In the East too, the dragon often appears in the mythology of India, China and Japan.

While generally considered evil and destructive in the West, dragon is known as a beneficient creature in the East. An Indian legend has it that the dragon helped bathe the infant Buddha and assisted him in his proselytizing efforts. In China, it appears as the national symbol and was the badge of the royal family. Ancient Chinese revered the dragon as one of the four guardian genii, the three others being the turtle, phoenix and kylin, another imaginary animal that looks like a cross between a horse and a giraffe.

A set of murals, depicting three of the mythological quadruplet, was discovered several years ago in a tumulus accidentally found at Asuka near Nara. One of the wall paintings showed the image of the dragon, forcefully painted in vivid colors. The stone-enclosed tomb, believed to have been built for some royal personage around the 7th Century, has since been designated as a special historical site and the murals as national treasures.

A bronze fountain in the compound of Horyuji Monastery in Nara.





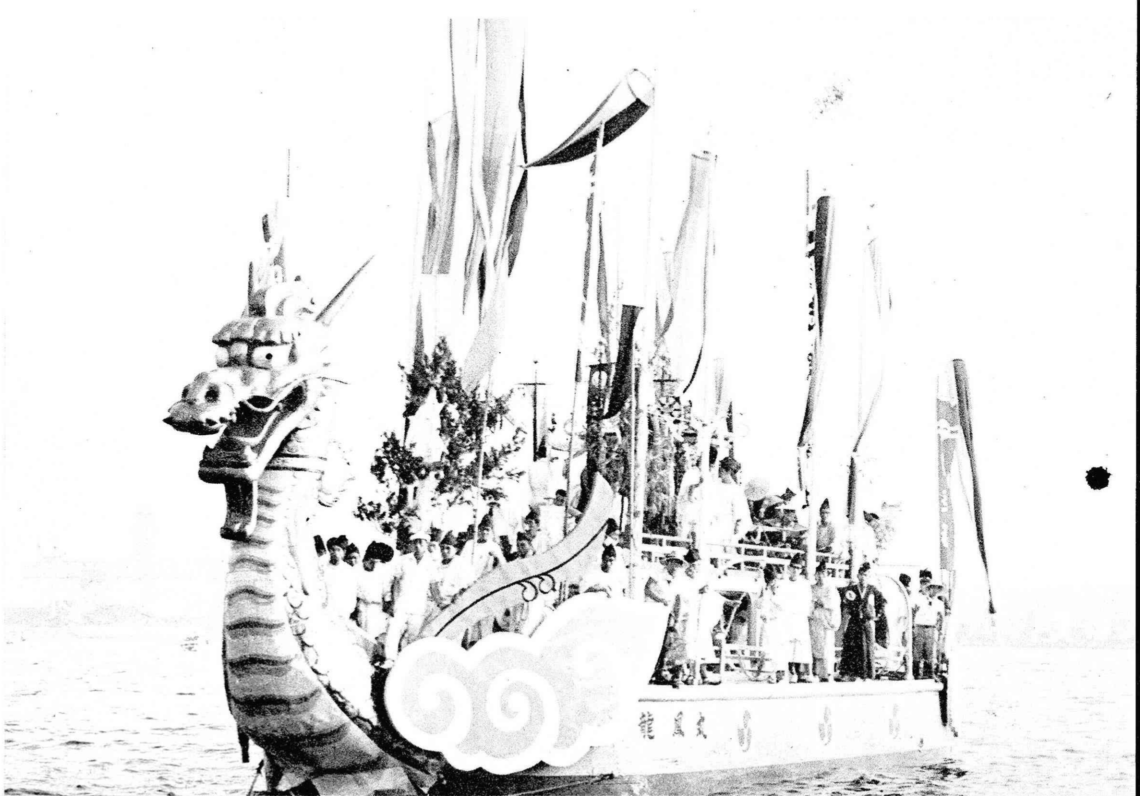


Left: The front pillars of Iwakisan Shrine in Iwate Prefecture are decorated with gigantic wooden sculptures of the ascending dragon. Below: A bronze sculpture of dragon atop the Chinese Gate of Toshogu Shrine in Nikko.



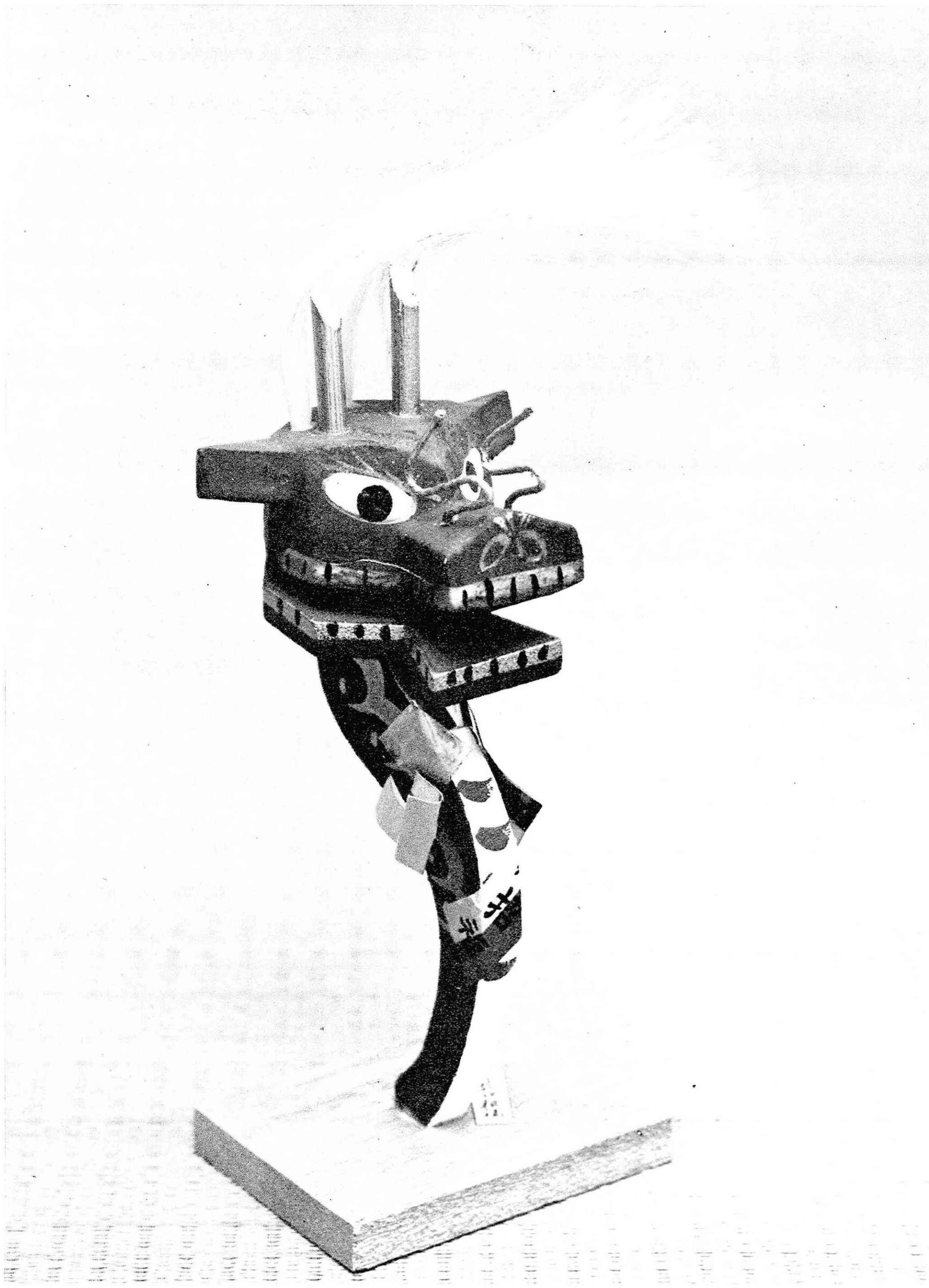


Dragon is featured in festival parades
at shrines and temples here and there in Japan.
Above: A view of the dragon dance
at Suwa Shrine in Nagasaki.
Riht: This vessel with a dragon head bow
leads a flotilla of fishing boats across Shiogama
Bay during the annual summer festival of a
local Shinto shrine. The shrine is
dedicated to seafarers' guardian gods.
Far right: A scene at Sensoji Temple in Tokyo.



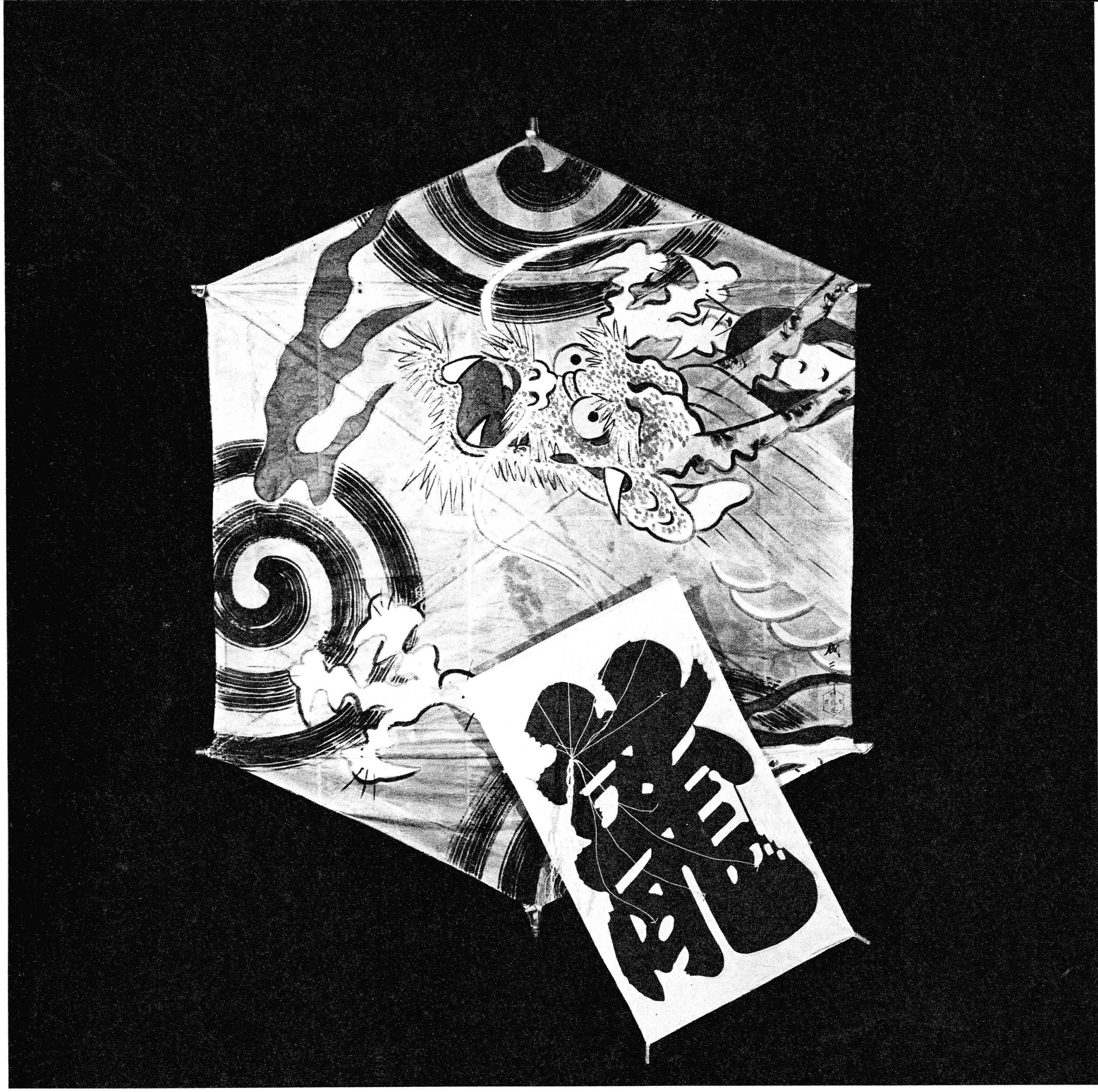


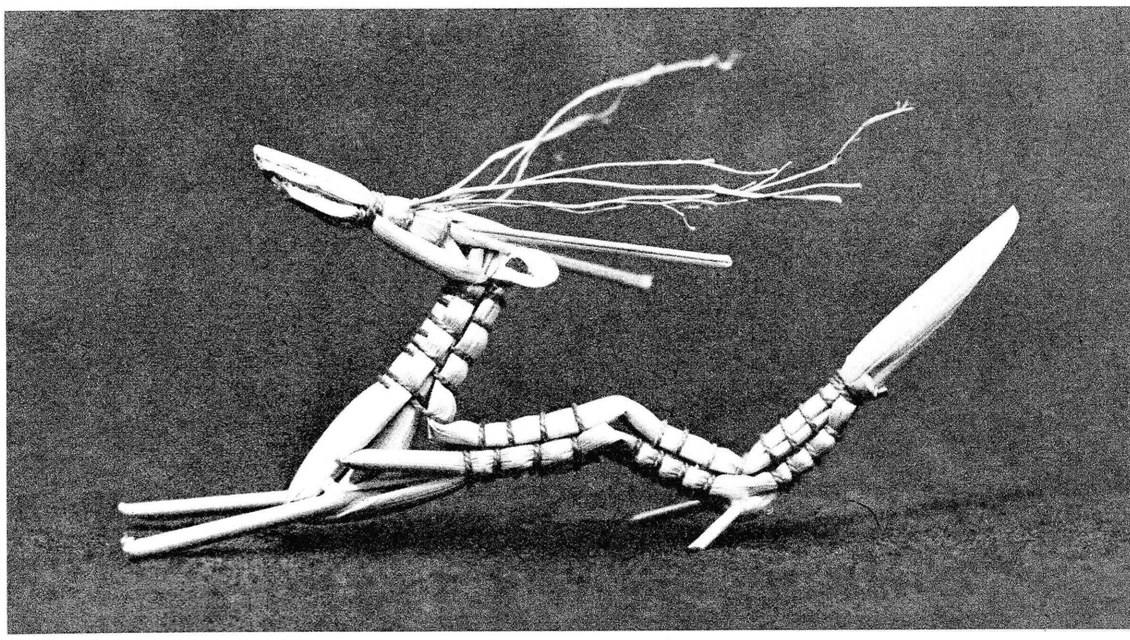
Dragon is a favorite motif in folk toys made in various parts of Japan. Shown below is the "good luck dragon" of Yamanashi Prefecture in central Honshu. At bottom is the papier-mache dragon which is a specialty of Shimane Prefecture.











Above: The hexagonal kite measures 1.5 meters from top to bottom. The rectangular model substitutes the Chinese letter ''ryu'' (dragon). Right: This straw-work is a product of Tochigi, a rural country north of Tokyo.





Above: The dragon depicted on the wall of Takamatsuzuka Tumulus is the oldest painting of the imaginary animal found in Japan. It shows off its fangs and a long tongue. Its cloven hoofs are tipped with sharp claws. Left: The papier-mache dragons shown here are folk toys of the Miharu District in Fukushima Prefecture. The toy is featured in the special New Year postage stamps for 1976.

TAKARAZUKA— A SUCCESS STORY

By KARIN FABER
Photos by NOBUAKI FUKUI



Takarazuka girls play all the roles in their shows including those of men — a factor responsible for their largely young female audience.

HALFWAY between Osaka and Kobe lies the small hotspring resort of Takarazuka, site of the renowned Takarazuka Girls' Revue, which has been immortalized by James Michener in his book, "Sayonara."

The novel, written at the time of the Korean War, is an East-West romance between an American Air Force major and a "Zuka girl." — the kind of romance, the girls say, that can never happen in real life. Perhaps not, but the bestseller novel — and hit movie — did gain them worldwide fame as being the most beautiful and talented Girls' Revue in the Orient.

The Takarazuka revue is as highly successful today as it was then. Their shows are potpourris, ranging from the tradition, romance and color of Japanese classical drama, such as Kabuki, to native folkdances and adaptions of Western musicals and operettas. Above all, the accent is on entertainment and the shows are always glittering, spectacular affairs from stage settings to costumes.

The latter tend to be at their most dazzling, especially to foreign audiences, during the staging of Japanese classical dramas. The *kimono* and *obi* then worn are made of gorgeous brocades and silks interwoven with gold and silver threads. All the costumes are carefully reproduced copies of those depicted in the famous ukiyo-e prints of the "floating world" of old Edo, a period dating from the seventeenth to early nineteenth century.

Even the elaborate hair-styles the girls wear are fascinating. Some are worn only for special occasions, such as marriage or the New Year festival, while certain others are exclusively worn by *geisha* and *maiko* (apprentice *geisha*). How to hold them all apart is a study in itself, but all kinds of accessories such traditional hair-styles require, from combs and exquisite ornamental pins to flowers, lacquer and pomade, are used to lend real authenticity to these colorful renditions of a bygone era.

To remain continuously successful over as long a time span as has the Takarazuka Girls' Revue is demanding work.

The troupe is comprised of 400 girls, divided into four separate groups, called "Flower," "Moon," "Snow," and "Star" respectively. Each group performs on a rotating basis at theatres and public halls in major cities throughout Japan, including Tokyo (across from the Imperial Hotel) and at the Takarazuka Grand Theatre, which, with a seating capacity for 3,000, is the largest theatre in the Orient.

The girls play all the roles in their shows, including those of men, which is an important aspect of their uniqueness and accounts for the largely young-female audience who see in the girls' impersonations of the male characters the ideal of what they think a man should be like.

Every Spring the Takarazuka Revue Company admits new girls between the ages of 15 and 18 as trainees. Applicants are never lacking, for becoming a "Zukette" is still the dream of many a young Japanese girl. Tests are given to some 250 to 300 applicants each time, but only 40 are admitted.

The lucky winners then step into the folds of a vast entertainment enterprise, which most leave — and even then very reluctantly — only when they get married.

The new trainee undergoes a rigorous two-year course in music, dance and drama—both Japanese and Western style—besides finishing her formal education. All this is being offered at the troupe's own school, which makes it a unique institution in Japan.

Discipline is strict and, if not adhered to, may mean dismissal from the troupe. No men are permitted into rehearsal or dressing rooms or dormitories. In fact, the latter are said to have been enclosed by barbed wire at one time to enforce the point.

Behind the scenes, putting the glamorous shows together, which, over the years have travelled to more than a dozen countries around the world, is a highly skilled staff of 300 producers, writers, set and costume designers and others.

More than half a million Japanese have seen the troupe's current hit, entitled "Rose of Versailles" (Berusaiyu-no-Bara), a frothy operetta set in Marie Antoinette's France, since the show first opened in September 1974. By popular demand it was restaged last fall in Tokyo. The show won the 1974 Art Festival Award, a top honor which coincided with the 60th anniversary of the Takarazuka Girls' Revue.

THE founding of the hotspring resort of Takarazuka and the Girls' Revue goes back to 1910 when an enterprising young man, named Ichizo Kobayashi, who had just bought a small - 82 miles of track - railway, that ran between Osaka and an obscure town, named Takarazuka, decided to promote business for his railway by converting the town into a hotspring resort.

At first this included nothing more than the building of a large swimming pool and a few individual family baths with which Kobayashi hoped to lure tired city dwellers on his railway from Osaka to Takarazuka. He soon added to his initial venture an indoor swimming pool, housed in a large building that also included other recreational facilities. But the desired success for the railway still did not come about. Something more spectacular was needed.

It didn't take Kobayashi very long before he came up with a new idea. He formed a group of 16 young girls who sang and danced before an audience seated where the indoor pool had been, while the girls performed on a stage built where the changing rooms had been. This time success was almost instant. The audience liked what it saw. Kobayashi's dancing girls were a direct counterpart to the traditional Kabuki dramas, where all the roles, including those of women, are played by men.

On April 1, 1914, the Takarazuka Girls' Opera, as it was then known, made its first public appearance. Four years later, Kobayashi, who by then had enlarged his troupe because of enthusiastic public support, took the girls to Tokyo. There too, support was ensured and from then on, success has been constant for the Takarazuka Girls' Revue.

As for the town of Takarazuka itself, Kobayashi created a Walt Disney-style Familyland, spread over an area of 150,000 square feet, complete with hotels, restaurants, fun rides and a zoo, housing more than 1,000 animals, birds and fish of 200 different species. There is also a botanical garden and a science park that features a "space walk" and a variety of "monsters" one might encounter on a strange planet. But drawing by far the largest crowd is "The Small World of Takarazuka" — an impressively colorful line-up of 650 singing and dancing dolls.

Kobayashi's desire to entertain the public extends into all other facets of the Japanese theatre — and beyond.

Under the banner of Toho Enterprises, he introduced, among other things, a new version of Kabuki, which is staged like a musical, but still retains a true traditional flavor as well. And he founded the highly popular Nichigeki Dancing Team, which uses both men and women in contrast to the all-female world of Takarazuka. Toho Enterprises also incorporates one of Japan's leading movie companies.

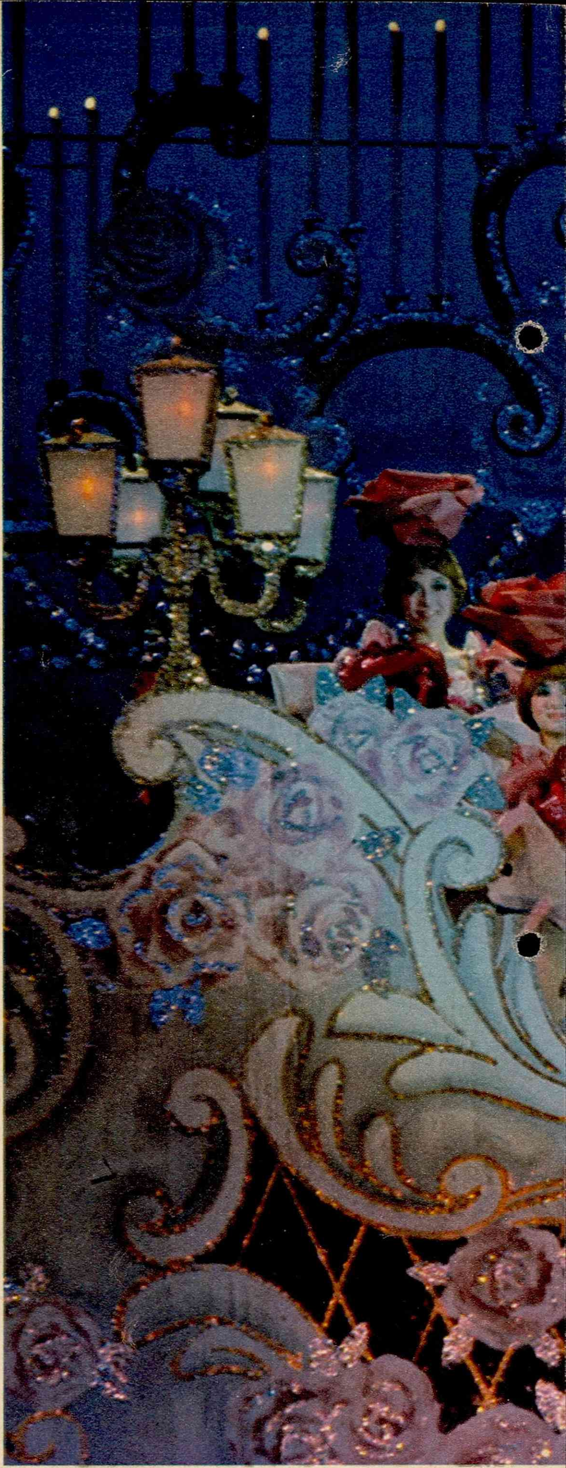


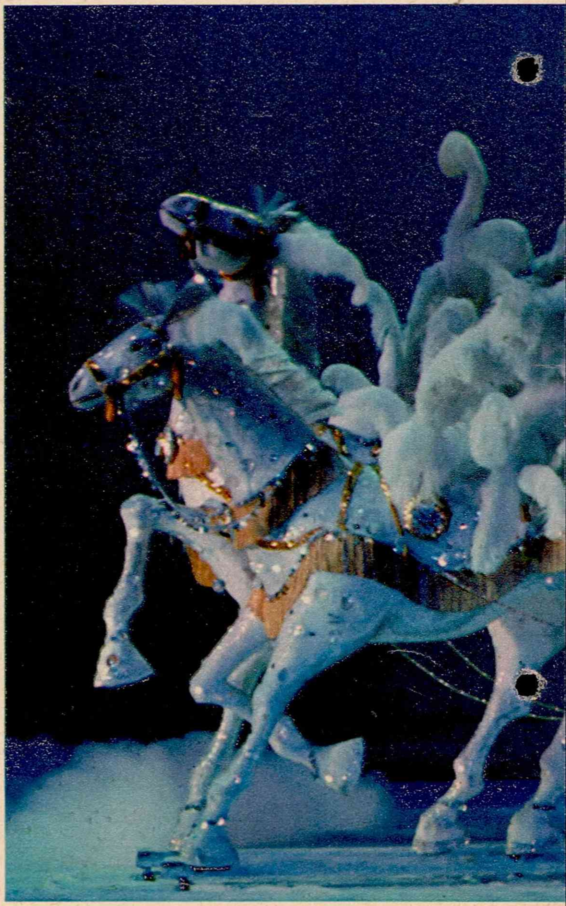
A Zuka star appears on the stage in all her splendor.

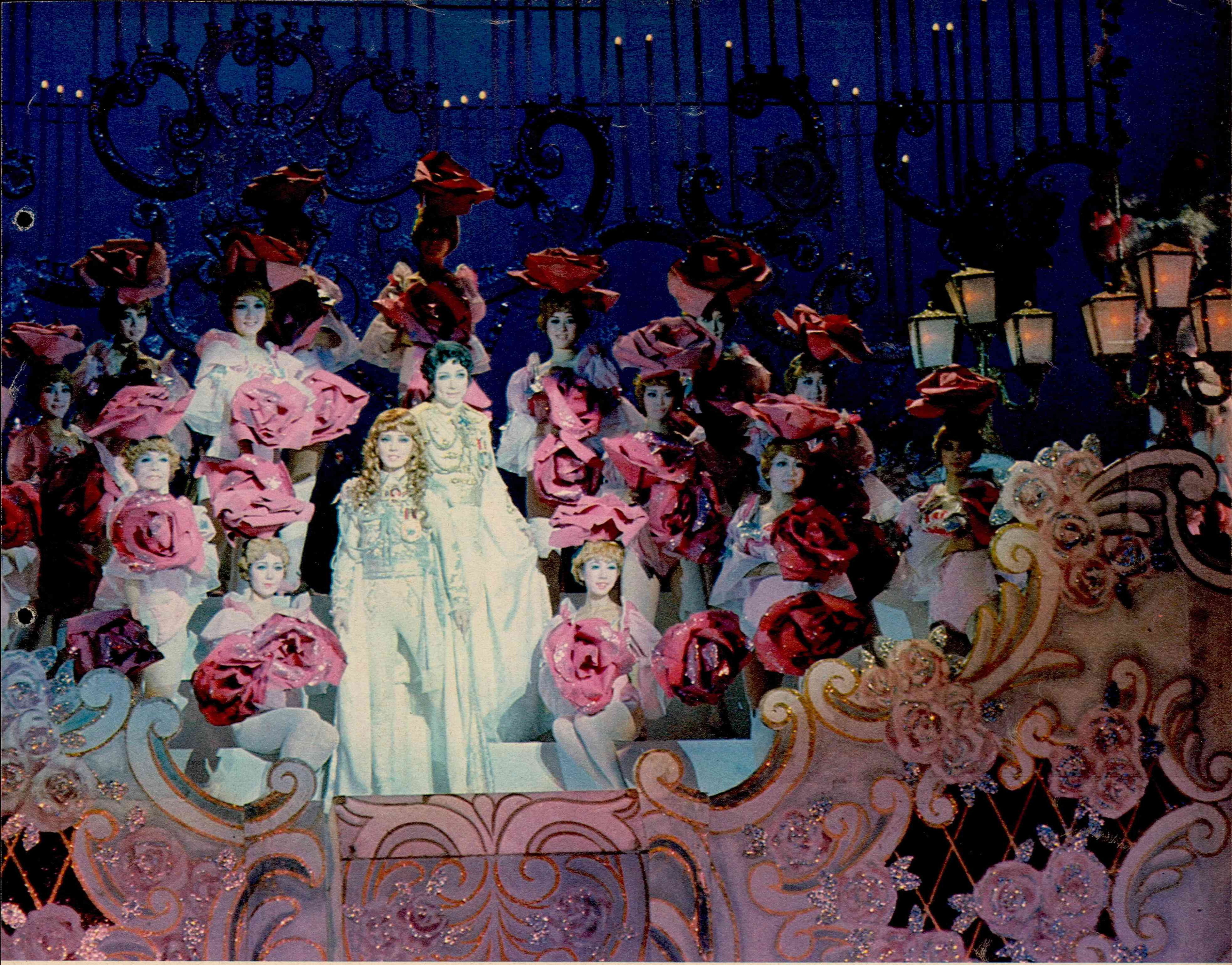
As for Kobayashi's railway—it was renamed the Hankyu Railway Company and today is one of the best operated and most profitable of private railways in Japan. Also combined under the Hankyu label are a string of six department stores, a professional baseball team (which recently won the coveted national baseball championship for 1975), a ranch, a ski resort, and a vast number of other profitable enterprises.

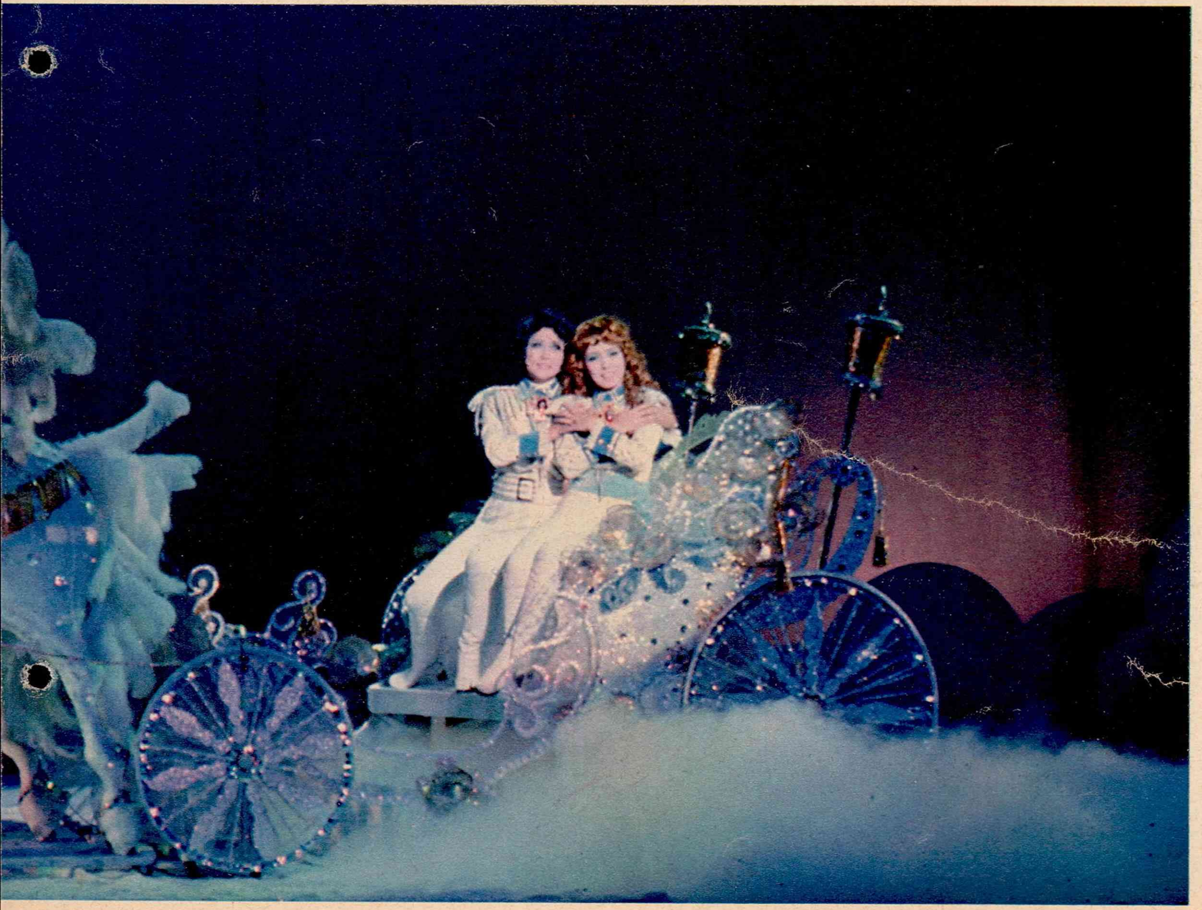
Thus, what began humbly enough with 16 young dancing girls turned into an unprecedented Japanese success story, because as Ichizo Kobayashi pointed out before his death in 1957 (at the age of 84): "My motto has always been to provide entertainment that does entertain."











"Rose of Versailles," a romantic operetta set in Marie Antoinette's France, has proved a big hit unprecedented in the 61-year history of the Takarazuka Revue. Photos on these pages show some scenes from the gaudy play.







New trainees of Takarazuka aged from 15 to 18 undergo a rigorous two-year course in music, dance and drama — both Japanese and Western style. All this is offered at the troupe's own school, the Takarazuka Music School.









Takarazuka shows are always glittering, spectacular affairs from stage settings to costumes.

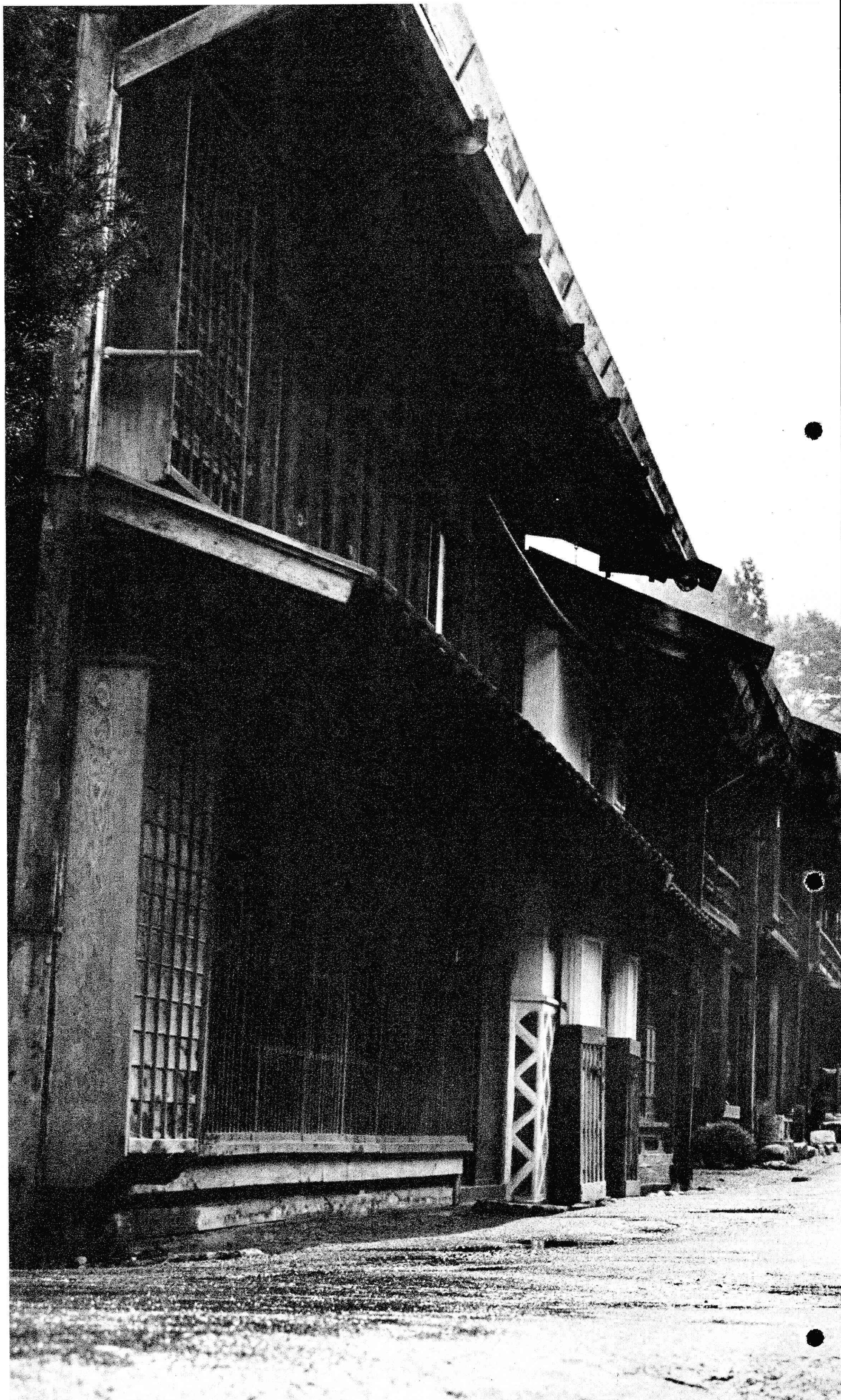


Rehearsal scene at the Takarazuka Grand Theatre.

KISO: VALLEY ALONG

By PATRICIA MASSY





Above: Guarding the path to sacred Mt. Ontake against evil, Fudo Myo-o is one of 20,000 stone markers that show pilgrims the way to the summit. Right: The joint effort of community, prefecture, and concerned individuals led to the delight of thousands of visitors who flock here to relive the old days. Last spring the village received extra financial help when the national government declared it a special area for preservation.

A FEUDAL HIGHWAY



Photos by JAPAN ILLUSTRATED

During the Edo Period there were five major highways in Japan. The most important was the Tokaido connecting the two capitals of Edo and Kyoto. Its 53 stops have become world-famous through the woodblock prints of Hiroshige. Another much traveled alternative link between these cities was a round-about way through the foothills of the Japan Alps that had 67 stops instead. Called the Nakasendo, or Mid-Mountain Road, it rambled past the present-day resort of Karuizawa, skirted the castle stronghold of Matsumoto, and then knifed through the Kiso Valley on its way to Gifu and Kyoto.

ALTHOUGH modern times have greatly altered the landscape along all the other feudal highways, the eleven inn towns of Kiso still retain much of the atmosphere of Hiroshige who found here the steep cliffs, hazy vistas, and genre subjects he so enjoyed reproducing. Porters and horses have been replaced by steel vehicles that speed along a highway by-passing all the villages and tunneling through mountains that once were formidable impediments, and a new breed of traveler is appearing in Snoopy sweatshirt and canvas knapsack instead of cotton cape and broad-brimmed straw hat. But the inns still remain set shoulder to shoulder along the old streets where farm produce is sunning on straw mats and women are gathered around ancient springs of pristine water to wash vegetables or rinse their laundry.

Just like the travelers of old one can slip off one's shoes in the earthen vestibule of an inn with darkened beams and lacquered doors and be welcomed to a room overlooking the street. In the winter you will sit around the sunken hearth aglow with a crackling fire and eat of simple country food: mushrooms, pickles, river fish. The greatest of delicacies here are rice dumplings wrapped in a bouquet of leaves or roasted on the fire with a flavorful paste of ground sesame seed and walnuts for yet few people can afford or have a taste for the sweets that are relished by those in industrialized areas.

Living in a mountainous, unproductive land that does not see spring until May, the people of Kiso have had to compensate for the poor soil by making much of little and by developing their human resources. Besides the highway service business of portering and innkeeping, many relied on the production of handcrafts. Sold as souvenirs or transported to the big cities, most were made of wood since the one great natural resource they did have was the dense forests of evergreen with trees hundreds of years old. Because evergreen grows tallest on steep slopes, Kiso has always had the best timber in Japan. It was ordered for the castles of Edo and Osaka and still now supports the holy shrine at Ise. To this day everywhere in Kiso one sees gigantic logs stacked by the roadside waiting to be taken to the sawmills and the scent of freshly hewn wood fills the crisp mountain air.

Kiso crafts are now enjoying a boom unprecedented since the 18th century as tourists flock to Kiso in a nostalgic attempt to recapture the good old days. From the fragrant hinoki cypress, the finest of all Japanese trees, are made bathtubs, pails, and cutting boards. Sliced paper-thin, the wood is woven into conical farmers' hats or made up into postcards. Nezuko, the Japanese arbor vitae, is used for clogs and the beautifully grained Zelkova and horse chestnut for lathe-turned mixing bowls as large as one meter in diameter.

During the feudal period, however, altogether six kinds of wood, including the above, were reserved for the exclusive right of the shogunate, and anyone who harvested them was punished by death. The saying "A head for a cypress" illustrates only too well the gruesome consequences. Even though the people of Kiso were surrounded by an abundance of wood, as most of the forests belonged to the government, they got little profit from them other than that of their labor as woodcutters. Their houses were rather flimsily constructed with a roof of wood shingles weighted down by rocks. Only people connected in some way with the government could procure fine timber. With the end of the feudal system the forests became the property of the Emperor, and now that they have reverted to the public with fewer restrictions than ever before, they are rapidly being depleted of the once sacred cypress.

ALTOGETHER life in Kiso has always been one of hardship, and traveling was not so romantic as it may seem looking at Hiroshige's prints. The 60 or so kilometers between the first and eleventh towns had to be traversed within three days and two nights. On the way the road was often no more than a mere path hugging the mountainside with the boulder-strewn Kiso River surging far below. Suspended bridges of vine led over the river that carried rafts of logs being poled down towards Nagoya by rivermen in straw capes. As horses were to be ridden only by samurai, the only amelioration for the ordinary traveler was an uncomfortable sedan chair of woven bamboo supported by two runners whose jogging gait sent it bouncing constantly up and down. Naturally no one carried suitcases of pretty clothes. The usual luggage consisted of two bundles tied together and slung like a saddle bag over the shoulder, a flint stone, and some rice for lunch.

At Fukushima where the Kiso Valley is squeezed into a bottleneck by impassable rugged mountains, a checkpoint with an impressive display of weaponry and armored guards confronted the traveler. Everyone had to present identification and a wooden passport stamped with a government seal. Fukushima however was a lively town not only because it was a military center but also because it was the starting point for pilgrimages up to the



Left: Bamboo screens and trays are necessary for serving noodles of buckwheat, a hardy plant that can withstand the severe mountain climate.



A steady hand, patience, and years of practice are what produces a fine comb of boxwood, a famous craft of Kiso since the 18th century.

sacred Mount Ontake which is still believed to be the abode of gods.

Rising 3,063 meters towards the sky, Ontake is one of the highest mountains of the Japan Alps, and life among the farm villages on its lower slopes has a Himalayan character. A local folk song goes "Even in summer on Ontake a lined kimono is too cold." In these villages can be seen the last of the Kiso ponies, once bred as draft horses and a very important source of income for the farmers. The horse fairs at Fukushima were always bustling with business, and the ponies were sold to all parts of the country. Now however cattle are mainly being raised instead.

Pilgrims dressed in white continue to tread the path to Ontake's snow-capped summit. The most famous was a Kiso girl called Oroku who was suffering from a disfiguring facial disease. When she prayed on the mountaintop, a voice told her to make a comb of birchwood with which to comb her tresses every morning and night. After following this advice, Oroku was cured, and in gratitude she began making combs for other women. These proved to be so popular that by 1800 the manufacture of Oroku combs was the major occupation at the third inn town of Yabuhara. Some of the combs were sent to the neighboring town of Narai to be lacquered and inlaid. Unfortunately these jewel-like ornaments are no longer produced, but the simple combs without decoration are still a favorite souvenir among travelers. In Narai, too, lacquerware continues to occupy 400 out of the 470 households, and the craftsmen have won national acclaim for their expert workmanship and design.

Thus Kiso endures the inevitable changes of our modern age giving its rustic spirit, its hard-won traditions to jet age travelers that find here a way of life preserved from the days of depending on hands and feet rather than computers and wheels.



Seven decades of experience have taught dextrous hands to weave in only 15 minutes the beautifully patterned Kiso hats made of strips of cypress wood.


旅館
越後屋

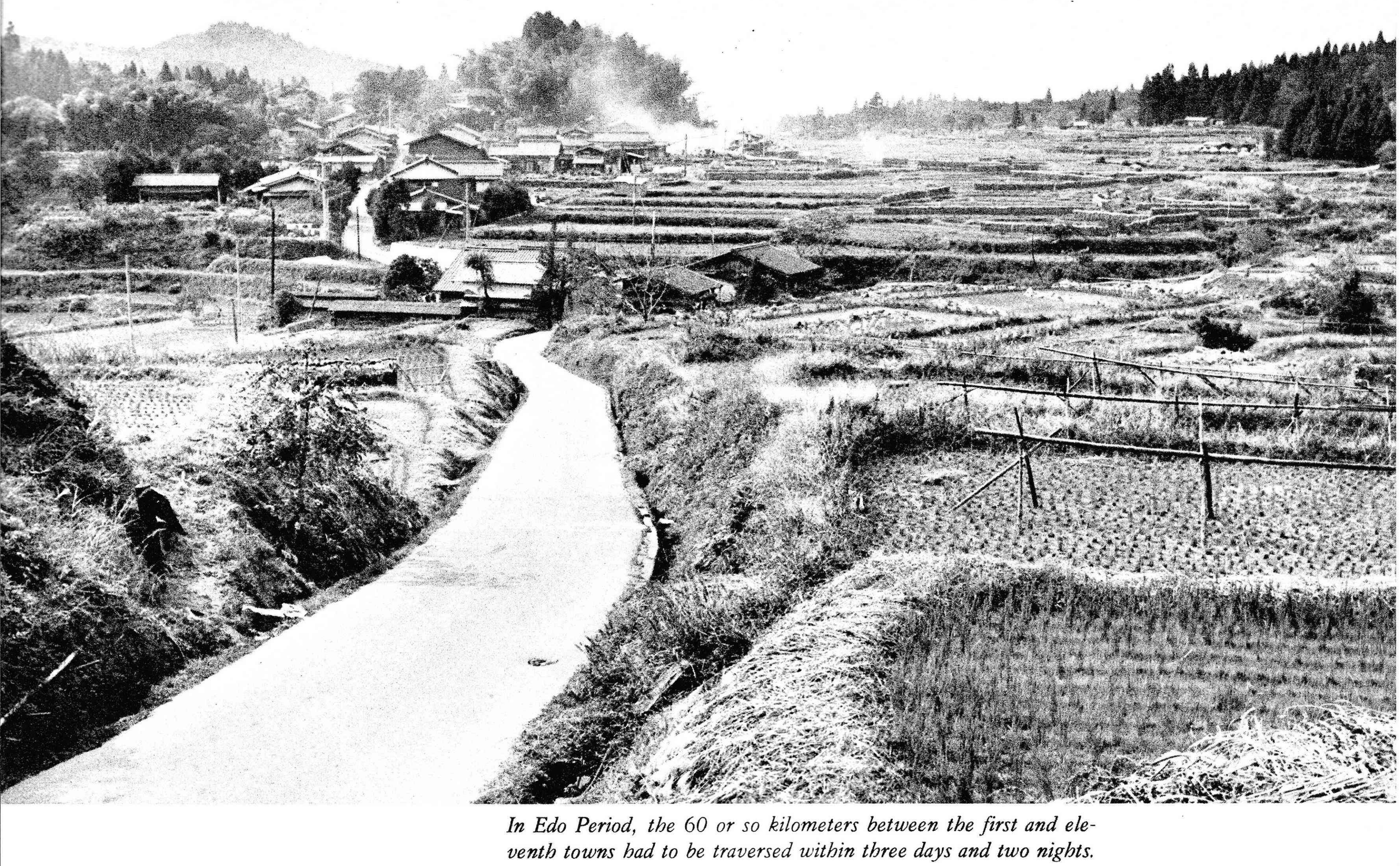




Left: This old-time inn at Narai exudes the melancholy charm common to the 11 inn towns along the "Mid-Mountain Road." The conscientious keeper of this establishment limits his guests to six per day.
Above: A large hearth with an overhanging kettle is the standard setting at Kiso Valley inns. The pothook adjuster is made in the shape of fish—a talisman designed to avert fire hazards.

Picturesque but telling, old Kiso houses have roofs of wood and shingles held down with stones to avoid the expense of tiles and nails.





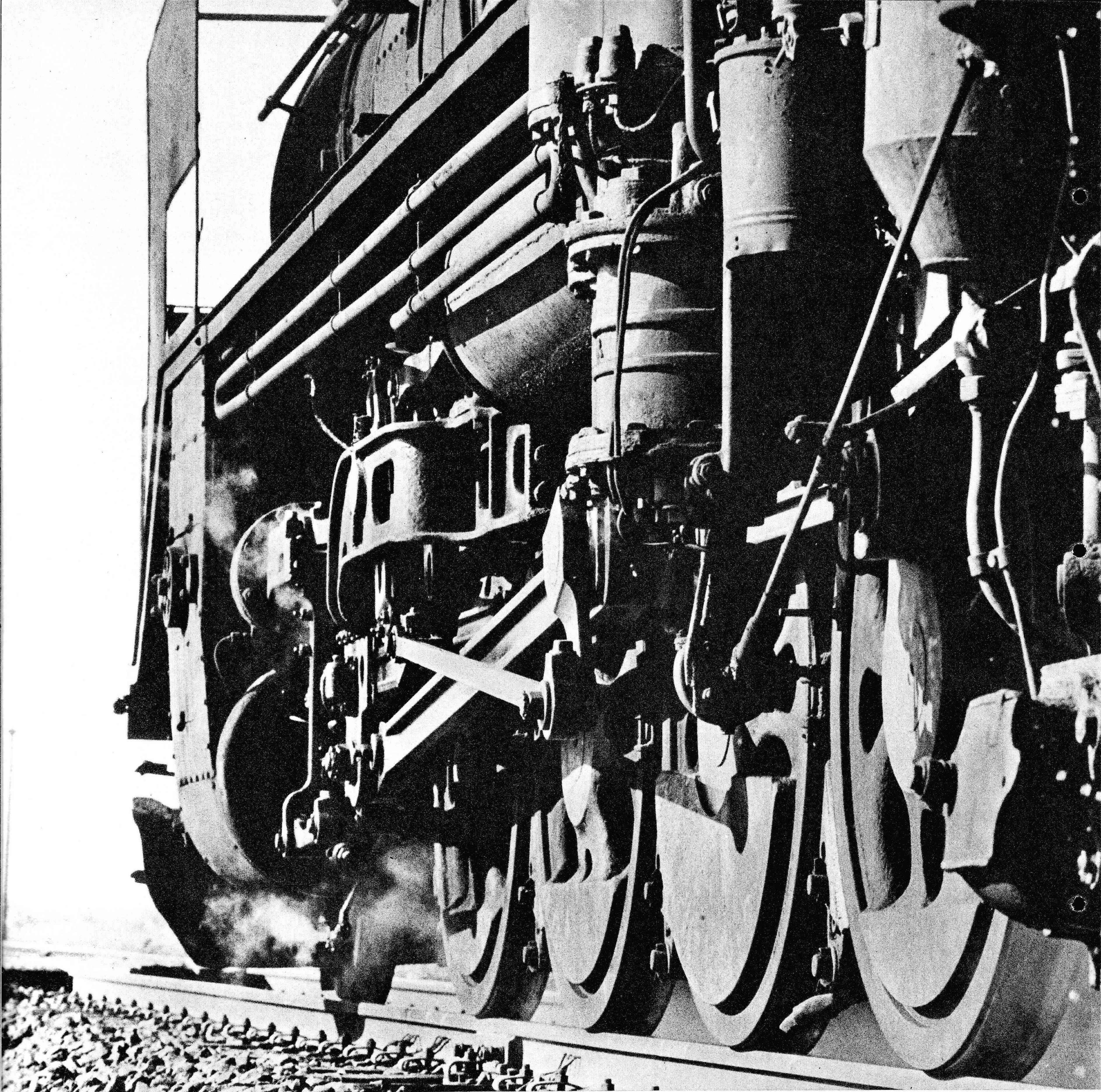
In Edo Period, the 60 or so kilometers between the first and eleventh towns had to be traversed within three days and two nights.

A magnificent scene like this is now fading into nostalgic past.



FAREWELL TO THE STEAM LOCOMOTIVE

Photos by NAOTAKA HIROTA



Steam locomotives will completely disappear from the Japanese landscape this month, January 1976, ending a proud history of more than a century.

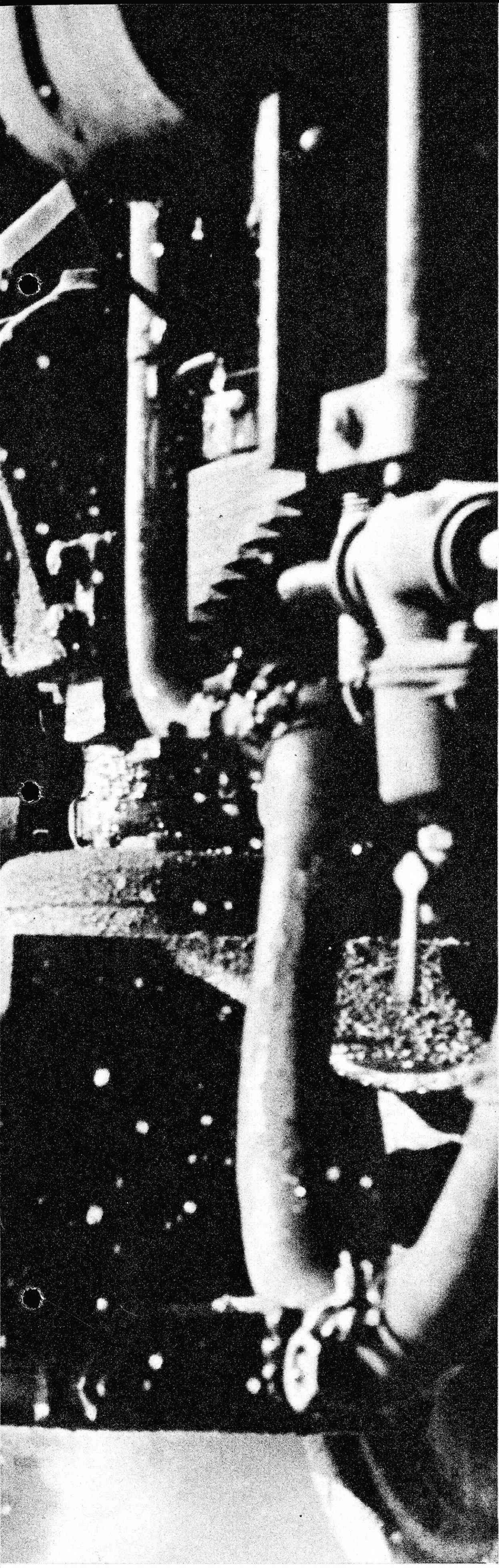
It was on October 14, 1872 that Japan's first railway line was opened between Tokyo and Yokohama. The first train, naturally pulled by a steam locomotive, traveled on a narrow-gauge railway over a distance of 29 kilometers in 53 minutes. The event marked a new milestone in the history of transportation in Japan.

Railroads developed fast in prewar days in terms of both traffic volume and mileage but they suffered serious damage to facilities and equipment during World War II.

Soon after the war, the Japanese railway faced another trial — the development of the automobile industry and the explosive popularization of auto travel. As a result, it appeared at one time that the railway industry was headed for a certain decline.

In 1964, however, the Japanese National Railways started the super-express Shinkansen service boasting a maximum speed of 260 kilometers an hour on standard gauge tracks. Shinkansen awakened the world to the great role railroads can play and won Japan worldwide fame for its superior railroading technology.

Japan had a modest fleet of 10 steam locomotives, all imported, when its first railroad line was opened. Later, it began making various types of narrow-gauge steam locomotives and soon reached the international level in respect to both speed and power. Steam locomotives reached their



peak number of 5,985 in 1946.

In 1958, a motive power modernization program was launched to electrify rail lines in order to eliminate smoke pollution, increase speed and boost transport capacity. Thus the once esteemed steam locomotives were gradually replaced by electric engines and electric trains, and the number of steam locomotives in active service decreased steadily — to 3,300 in 1964, 809 in 1972 and to only 177 as of January 1, 1975.

The last line on which steam locomotives were in service is Muroran Main Line connecting Iwamizawa with Higashi Muroran in Hokkaido. Left: The D51 for freight train used to be the most popular among the various types of steam locomotives operated in this country. It weighs 78 tons; its driving wheels are 1.4 meters in diameter. Below photos: A passenger train pulled by a C57 steam locomotive starts from a local station.



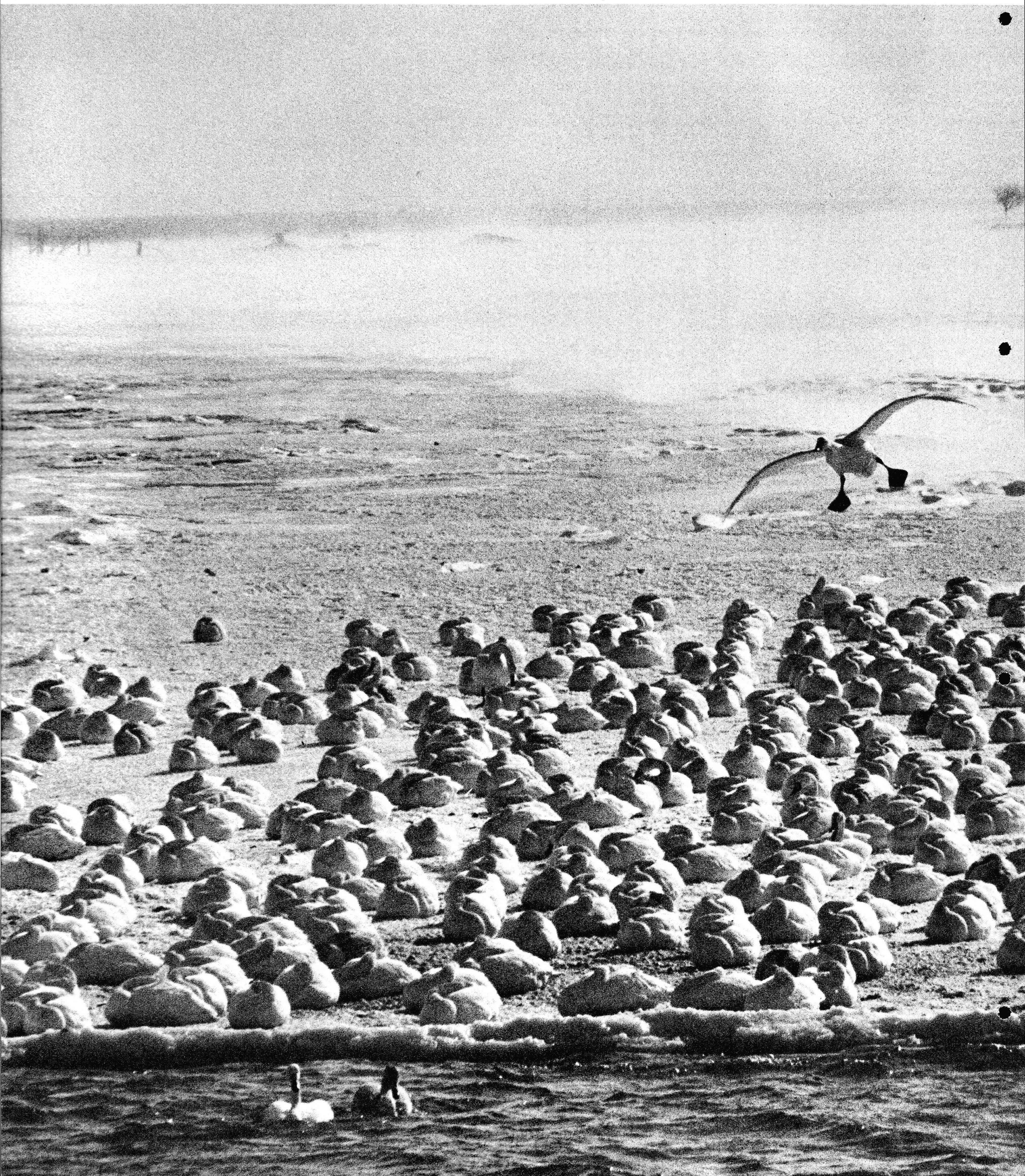






The first train of the day, pulled by a steam locomotive, speeds through the snow field of Hokkaido.

HAVENS FOR THE BIG



BIRDS

Photos by NAOTOSHI TEJIMA



The biggest and most beautiful wild birds in Japan are the *O-hakucho* (swan) and the *Tancho-zuru* (Japanese crane). The scientific name of the former is "Cygnus cygnus" and the latter "Grus japonensis." Their wings, when spread out, measure nearly two meters long.

The original home of the swan is Siberia where the young are hatched. They migrate to Japan in winter to seek lakes and ponds which do not freeze. Usually, they are first sighted in Japan in November, and after spending the winter, they return to their native habitat in March the following year.

In Japan, they are found in the swamplands of Odaito in Hokkaido, Kominato in Aomori Prefecture and Lake Hyoko in Niigata Prefecture, which are all geographically favorable for them. This is the principal reason why the swans are concentrated in these three regions but there is another reason why the birds choose these districts to spend the long winter months. It is the protective measures taken by the inhabitants of the regions concerning the environment and the feeding of the birds. Food is brought to the swans in the thick of winter when the snow lies deep. Injured birds are hospitalized until they are healed and become strong enough to fly back to their home in Siberia.

Meanwhile, the *Tancho-zuru* or Japanese crane is found only in the swampland of Kushiro, in Hokkaido. Manchuria and Korea are the only other places in the world where the birds are found. They build a nest, which measures 1.5 meters in diameter, directly on the marsh, using small twigs and reeds as material. The hen lays two eggs, of which usually only one is hatched.

It was in 1922 that the habitat of the Japanese crane was first discovered in the swampland of Kushiro. It was immediately made off limits to hunters and the crane was designated a natural monument. Measures were then implemented to help preserve the rare species. Despite these protective measures, a great number of the birds froze to death in winter and according to a survey conducted in 1935, less than 30 of them were found to be living in the district. This figure decreased further during and immediately after World War II, but since 1952, when members of a society for protecting the birds succeeded in feeding the birds, their number rose to 61 in 1955 and to 180 in 1960. By 1974, the number of Japanese cranes had increased to 250.

These swans huddling up on the beach are part of the more than 10,000 that migrate from Siberia to Odaito in Hokkaido every winter.

Below: A Japanese crane sails through the air in all its solitary majesty. Bottom: A cold day breaks at Hyoko, a "swan lake" on the Japan Sea coast of northern Honshu, the main Japanese island.



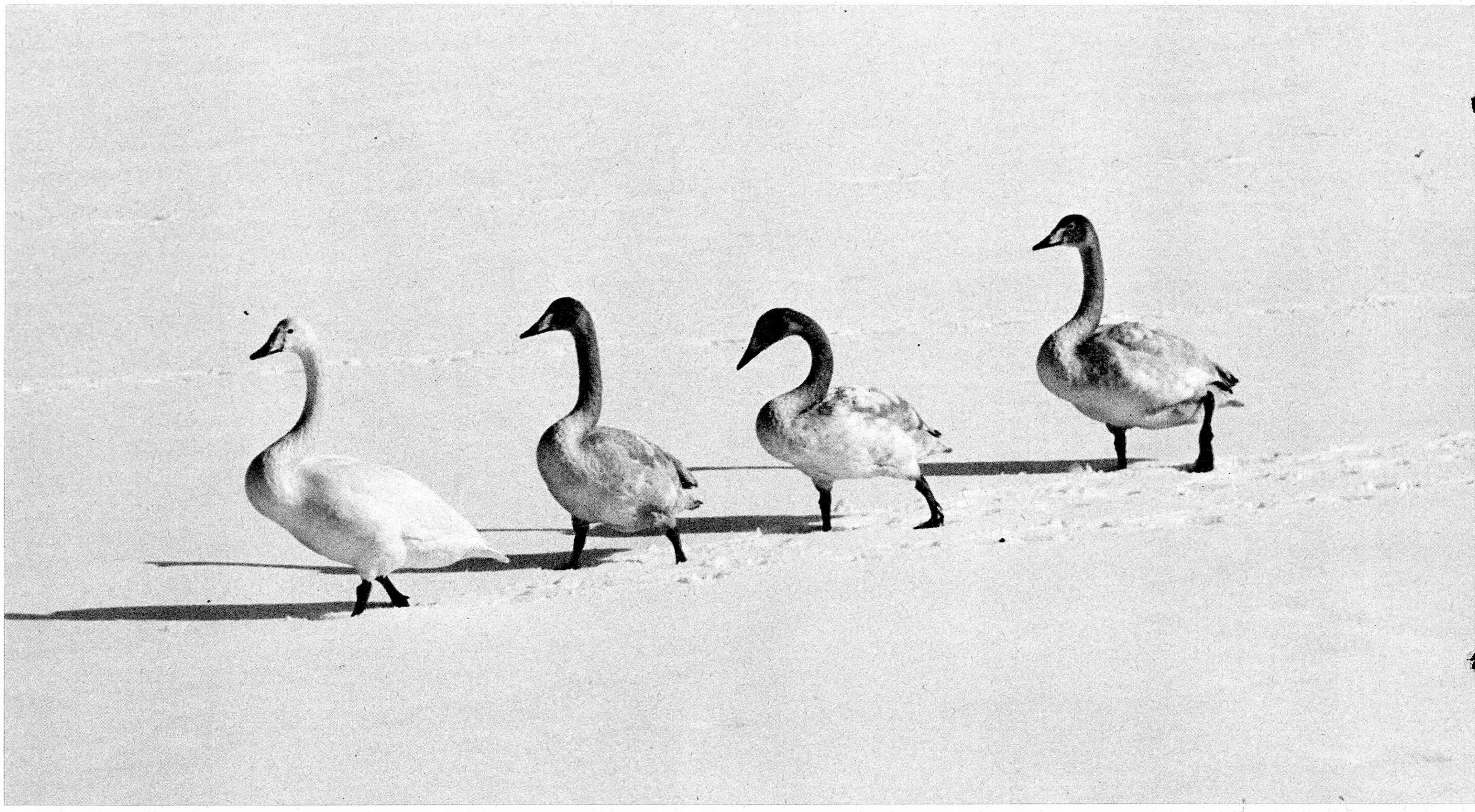




Swans huddle together on the frozen swamp of Odaito.

A couple (below) and a family (bottom) of swans.





Photos on the opposite page show some of the Japanese cranes found in the swampland of Kushiro, where the colony is increasing steadily thanks to protective measures taken since 1952.









The big, graceful birds saunter about in their secluded habitat.

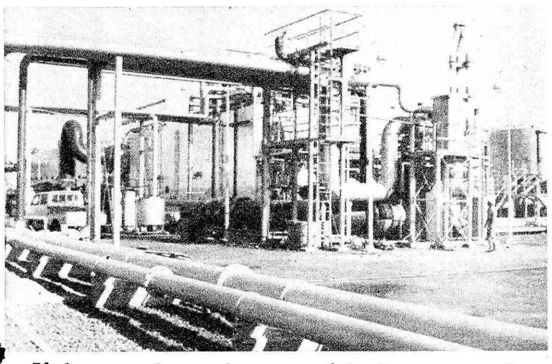
New Experiment May Improve Salt-to-Fresh Water Process

The Agency of Industrial Science and Technology has started a salt-to-fresh water distillation experiment with a newly developed test plant (photo). The object is low-cost and corrosion-free desalination.

The agency hopes that the experiment now under way at Showa Denko K.K.'s industrial complex in Nakanosu, Oita Prefecture, will help the agency develop a plant capable of turning salt water into fresh water at a rate of 1 million tons a day at less than ¥40 per ton.

The experiment represents the final stage of the agency's disalination program which started six years ago.

The test plant, which has been partially completed to make 25,000 tons of fresh water a day, will be test-run for about a year. When completed, the plant will produce 100,000 tons of fresh water daily.



If the experiment is successful, the agency plans to export the new desalination plants to Middle East countries which have been troubled with corrosion in their desalination plants.

The test plant now under trial run adopts a method of "multi-stage flash" distillation coupled with what is called "high-flow-rate long-tube method."

The multi-stage flash distillation makes use of the fact that water's boiling point varies in relation to atmospheric pressure.

Water, which boils at 100 C. under one atmospheric pressure, boils at a lower temperature under lower pressure.

Another characteristic of water is that when steam is suddenly introduced from one room to another with a lower temperature, it instantly expands and cools itself to make dew.

The plant takes in 5,500 tons of sea water per hour, and heats it up to 121 C. The heated sea water is pressurized to the equivalent of a little over 1.1 atmospheric pressure. It is then flushed into a boiling room whose inner pressure is kept at 1.1 atmospheric pressure.

The water instantly boils to make steam, which expands until its temperature falls to 119 C. In the process, part of the steam produced in the room condenses into fresh water.

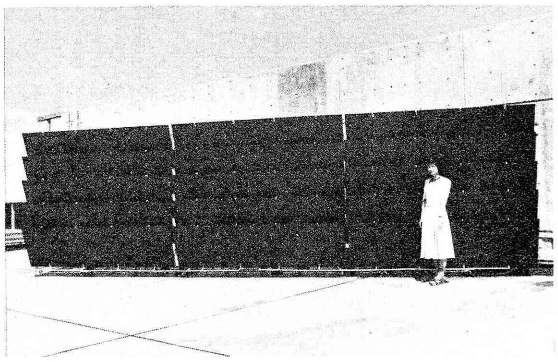
The sea water passes through 50 other similar rooms that are arranged according to the amount of pressure inside and turns into fresh water, the officials explained.

The agency believes that the plant will help solve future water shortages not only in the Middle East countries but also in Japan.

Epoch-Making Air Conditioning System Utilizing Air and Solar Energy Completed

The Kajima Corporation has developed an epoch-making air conditioning system through a maximum utilization of solar energy and the special characteristic of air.

The trade name of the system is "SOL-AIR Heat-Pump" and the first commercial product has been installed in the corporation's Kajima Institute of Construction Technology in Chofu, Tokyo. (see photo).



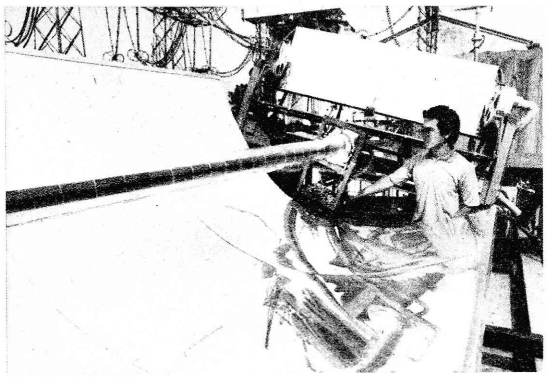
The system is composed of simple components — an outdoor heat-absorber-radiator, an electric heat pump which directly provides a refrigerant to the heat-absorber-radiator, an indoor heat exchanger and a thermal storage tank. The system adopts a special refrigerant circuit.

The most notable component of the system is the heat-absorber-radiator. It is installed facing the south and made up of a flat louber. Each absorber plate is made of special aluminum panels. Utilizing the fact that the solar altitude is different in summer and winter, it absorbs solar heat to the maximum during winter but does not absorb solar rays much during the summer months.

According to this system, when solar heat is not available on cloudy days, it can absorb the heat from natural draft and wind. Cooling operation is carried out chiefly during the night when heat radiation is more advantageous. By utilizing nocturnal radiation and natural draft and the wind, the cooling operation can be performed more effectively.

The system is not only maintenance-free but also considerably effective as it can provide both heating and cooling air conditioning. It also dispenses with boilers, heaters and other auxiliary heat sources, a characteristic which is not found in conventional systems utilizing solar heat alone. Authorities concerned believe that the system has opened a new vista for air conditioning in the future:

Solar Power Generator Shown to Public



The Electrotechnical Laboratory of the Agency of Industrial Science and Technology recently demonstrated a steam turbine electric generator powered by solar energy. A 20-Watt electric bulb was lit in a public test held at the laboratory in the suburbs of Tokyo.

The generator consists of two reflecting mirrors, i.e., a 4.5 square-meter fixed one and a six square-meter movable one, a heat storage device, a heat exchanger and a turbine. When the concave reflecting mirror with a special infrared ray absorption system was exposed to the heat of the sun, the heat exchanger started to produce steam at a temperature of from 250 to 300 C (507 to 597 F), which turned the turbine to generate electric current.

A senior official of the laboratory said that the experimental generator could utilize only 10 per cent of the captured solar energy and that the laboratory planned to raise the ratio to 20 or 25 per cent in the near future.

The program is part of the "Sunshine Project" sponsored by the Ministry of International Trade and Industry in search of new and clear energy sources. The laboratory, which is affiliated with MITI, will develop a larger scale experimental plant with a maximum generating capacity of 100 kilowatts by 1977 or 1978, and another plant capable of generating 1,000 kilowatts by 1980.

Tubular Incandescent Lamp Developed

A thin and long tubular incandescent lamp resembling a fluorescent lamp has been developed recently by Tokyo Shibaura Electric Co., Ltd., a leading manufacturer of household electrical ap-

ESTABLISHMENTS THAT ARE THE TALK OF THE TOWN

pliances. The new product is called "interior lamp" and can be used for interior decoration purposes in combination with shades made of various types of prisms and cut glass. The shades make the lamp emit beautiful geometric patterns of light.

An ordinary electric lamp is usually round in shape, but Toshiba's "interior lamp" is in the form of a long and thin glass tube (diameter 12.5 mm). Double-coiled filaments are placed at appropriate intervals in the tube. The lamp comes in three sizes, with 3, 5 and 8 filaments. One lamp, therefore, can produce the same lighting effects as those from several conventional lamps.

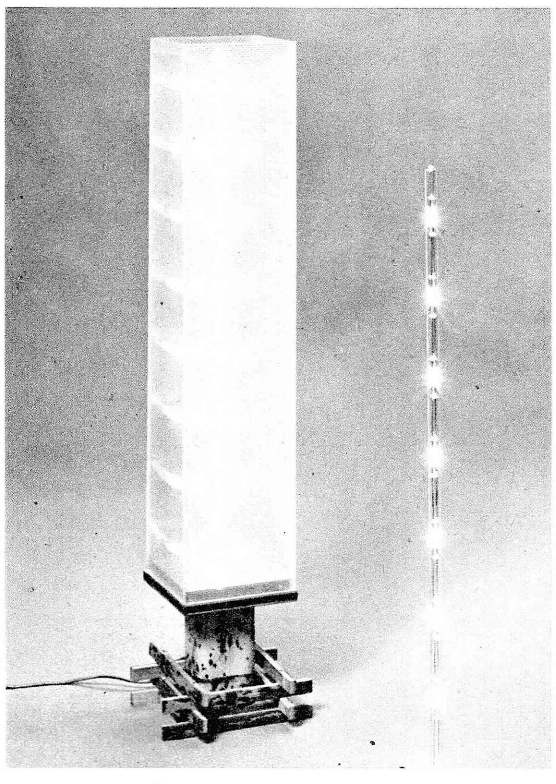
Also, because the glass tube is thin, the flow of gas in the tube is limited. This prevents the surface of the glass tube from becoming heated, thus eliminating the danger of one's fingers being burnt on contact with the tube as is the case with an ordinary incandescent lamp. This feature also makes it possible to use the lamp in combination with various other appliances.

Only one socket will suffice and, moreover, this lamp lasts 2,000 hours on the average.

Because of these features, if a number of lamps of different sizes are used, a new type of chandelier can be produced. Also, by combining various types of shades made of prisms or cut glass, beautiful light patterns can be obtained.

The manufacturer of the "interior lamp" sees potential markets for its new product in hotels, department stores, retail stores and ordinary households for decorative purposes.

At right in the below photo is the body of the newly developed "interior lamp." At left is a lamp with a shade.



Unmanned Bank System Developed



The Omron Tateishi Electronics Company, a leading maker of information system appliances, has come up with a new system which dispenses with human labor at bank counters. Dubbed the "Omron Mini Bank System," it incorporates among others an automatic cash payment machine, an automatic cash deposit machine and a paper money exchange machine.

Other devices incorporated in the system are a crime and fire prevention system, an autodial system which automatically informs the bank when there is an accident or trouble, an unmanned shutter, a television camera, an information system which tells the client how to use the automated system. The entire system requires only 40 square meters for space. The system and its installation cost from ¥50 million to ¥60 million, according to the manufacturer.

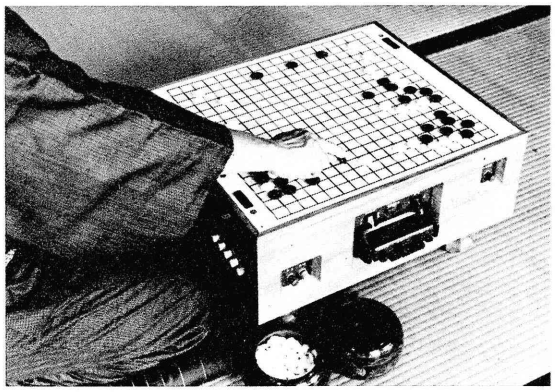
Banks and other financial institutions are currently thinking about closing shop two days a week as many other commercial and industrial firms do and in order to lengthen the time to serve their clients in the remaining five days of work, they are carrying out plans to have automatic machines do the work of the bank tellers at such counters where money is deposited or withdrawn or paper money exchanged. These are the counters where labor is highly concentrated. Tateishi's new Omron Mini Bank System was developed to meet the demand for automation of such clerical work.

It is quite likely that many banks will soon install the unmanned banking vestibules on their premises.

Video Tapes Replay *'Go'* Games

Just as the game of chess is popular in Western countries, *go* has enjoyed huge popularity among the Japanese from ancient times. The game is played so widely in the country that in large cities there are numerous special "*go* houses" catering to enthusiasts.

The Isuzu Electric Co. in Amagasaki, Hyogo



Prefecture, recently came up with an electric *go* board which records the moves of the game and replays them.

The surface of the board is made of semi-transparent plastic and the box underneath contains a cassette tape recorder and a control circuit. Directly underneath the 361 places where the black lines crisscross each other are implanted the same number of lamps and magnetic coils.

When a player touches a special pen to the point where he intends to place a *go* stone, it is recorded by the tape recorder. Built into the pen are a dry battery and a high-frequency oscillator, which light up the lamps and make the memory system of the control circuit record each move.

In other words, the two players touch the intersections of the black lines on the board before making their moves and the progress of their play is recorded on the tape incorporated in the box.

When the tape which has recorded the entire play is replayed, the whole game is reproduced on the board as the lamps light up one after another. *Go* enthusiasts can pick up any of the tapes in stock and study the records of the plays — either those they took part in or those performed by others.

By using this new device, a player can enjoy watching the progress of the games played before and also try to improve his skills by learning from the record of exemplary games played by experts.

A Kite Which Flies and Flutters Like a Butterfly

Is it possible to make a kite which flies and flutters like a butterfly? Can we utilize modern aerodynamics to produce a kite which simulates the flight of a butterfly?

Pondering these questions, a certain Japanese engineer resolved to produce a kite which met these requirements. The fruit of his efforts was the SFO (Scientific Flying Object), a kite which not only can soar to a height of 1,000 meters but also flutter like a real butterfly. Theoretically, the kite can fly up to a maximum altitude of 3,000 meters.

The term "SFO," of course, is a humorous nickname adapted from "UFO" (Unidentified Flying Object).

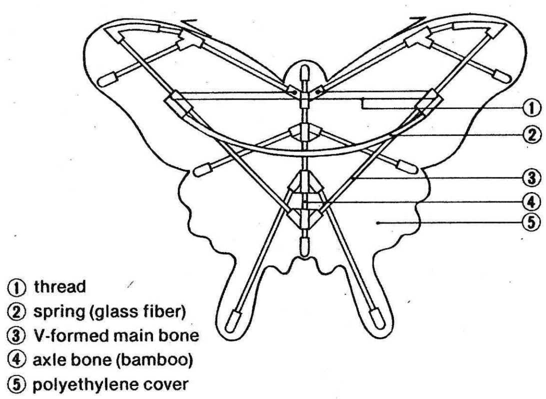
The framework of the SFO consists of a V-shaped main bone like that of a butterfly and an axle bone made of bamboo (see chart). A glass fiber spring is attached to the V-shaped main bone and it serves to divert wind pressure and also causes vibration, making the kite flutter like a real butterfly.

Hitherto, a conventional kite could be flown up to only a limited height because of the weight of the string and wind pressure. But the SFO can be flown to an altitude of 1,000 meters because the string used is light and the kite is so structured as to divert wind pressure. Also, because the materials used are light and durable, the SFO can fly up even in a mild breeze.

Although the SFO is only a children's plaything, the fact that it can soar to a height of 1,000 meters makes it useful for sea and mountain rescue and simple meteorological observations such as supplying information on wind direction.

An advanced model of the SFO can be flown even when no wind is blowing. This is an epochal event in the old Japanese tradition of kite-making.





Ocean Expo's Pacific Yacht Race

A 34-year-old veteran Japanese yachtsman won the trans-Pacific yacht race held in commemoration of the 1975 International Ocean Exposition in Okinawa.

Hiroshi Totsuka of Nagano completed the gruelling 12,000-kilometer voyage from San Francisco to the Expo site on November 2.

Totsuka's sloop, named the Wing of Yamaha, was the first to arrive among the eight yachts which took part in the cross-Pacific solo race which started in San Francisco on September 21.

He covered the distance in 41 days, 14 hours and 33 minutes.

This was the second cross-Pacific yacht race. In the previous contest held in 1969, a French naval officer set a record by covering the San Francisco-Jogashima (Japan) route in 39 days, 15 hours and 59 minutes. Totsuka's feat matches the Frenchman's because this time the distance involved was longer by 1,000 kilometers, according to contest organizers.

The only woman among the eight contestants, Miss Noriko Kobayashi, completed the race in 57 days 38 minutes and 11 seconds.



She set a new distance record for a solo yacht cruise by a woman.

Miss Kobayashi, born in Tokyo in 1946, is a free-lance writer. Slim and petit, she is a veteran sailor with a yachting career of 10 years.

Her yacht was 8.99 meters long and made of reinforced plastic.

She was sixth in the race.

Of the eight contestants, Kenichi Horie, 36, who in August 1962 became the first solo yachtsman to cross the Pacific from Japan to San Francisco aboard his 5.8-meter sloop, placed third due to wireless radio trouble.

It took him 47 days, 2 hours 49 minutes and 51 seconds to reach the goal.

This was Horie's fourth trans-Pacific cruise. In 1973 through 1974, he sailed around the world in 275 days.

6th World Popular Song Festival In Tokyo



Miyuki Nakajima of Japan (photo above) and Mister Loco, a Mexican rock group (photo below), won the Grand Prix in the World Popular Song Festival in Tokyo on November 16, 1975.

Forty-six songs were entered in the annual festival, held at Nippon Budokan Hall under the sponsorship of the Yamaha Music Foundation November 14-16.

Miss Nakajima sang "Time Goes Around" — her own composition. The Mexican group sang "Lucky Man" composed by Jorge Garcia-Castil.

The Most Outstanding Performance awards went to Tom Sullivan of the U.S. who sang "Beauty Is in the Eyes of the Beholder" and Neyda Perdomo of Venezuela who sang "Juntos en la Eternidad."

Outstanding Composition awards were won by Billy Tragesser of the U.S., Francis Lai of France, Charlie Leroy of Argentina, Yukio Hiasa of Japan, Gino Mescoli of Italy, Jose Cid of Portugal, Andre Popp of France, Akira Inaba of Japan and Betty and Barry Henninger of Australia.

Outstanding Performance awards went to Fernando de Madariaga of Argentina, Mary Spiteri of Malta, Ben Cramer of the Netherlands, and Shigeru Matsuzaki and Yoko Shibata of Japan.



Fragrant Promenade

The world's first "Fragrant Promenade" was completed last October at Seimeien, a home for blind old people in Tokyo.

Most of the 160 blind people living there lost their sight after they became more than 50 years old. They wished to be able to feel the change of seasons by smelling at the flowers and trees with which they were familiar when they could see. The "Fragrant Promenade" made their dream come true.

Such fragrant flowers and trees as the azalea, fragrant olive, Cape jasmine, sweet-smelling daphne, alpine rose and myrtus were planted along the 64-meter-long pavement. While they enjoy the scents of trees and flowers, the old people can take a strolling exercise with the aid of guide ropes strung along the path.

The walkway was planned and built by members of the Tokyo Aoi Lions Club with the cooperation from volunteer officers of the Imperial Palace Guard and goodwill workers of the Taisei Road Construction Company. The club also prepared a pamphlet on the project and the Lions' international monthly magazine gave it worldwide publicity.



Japanese Uniforms for Olympic Winter Games

Smart new uniforms have been designed for members of Japan's team for the 1976 Winter Olympic Games to be held in February in Innsbruck, Austria. The blue uniforms for both male and female Olympians were designed by an Isetan Department Store team headed by Mrs. Keiko Matsumoto. The uniforms cost an average of ¥88,500.





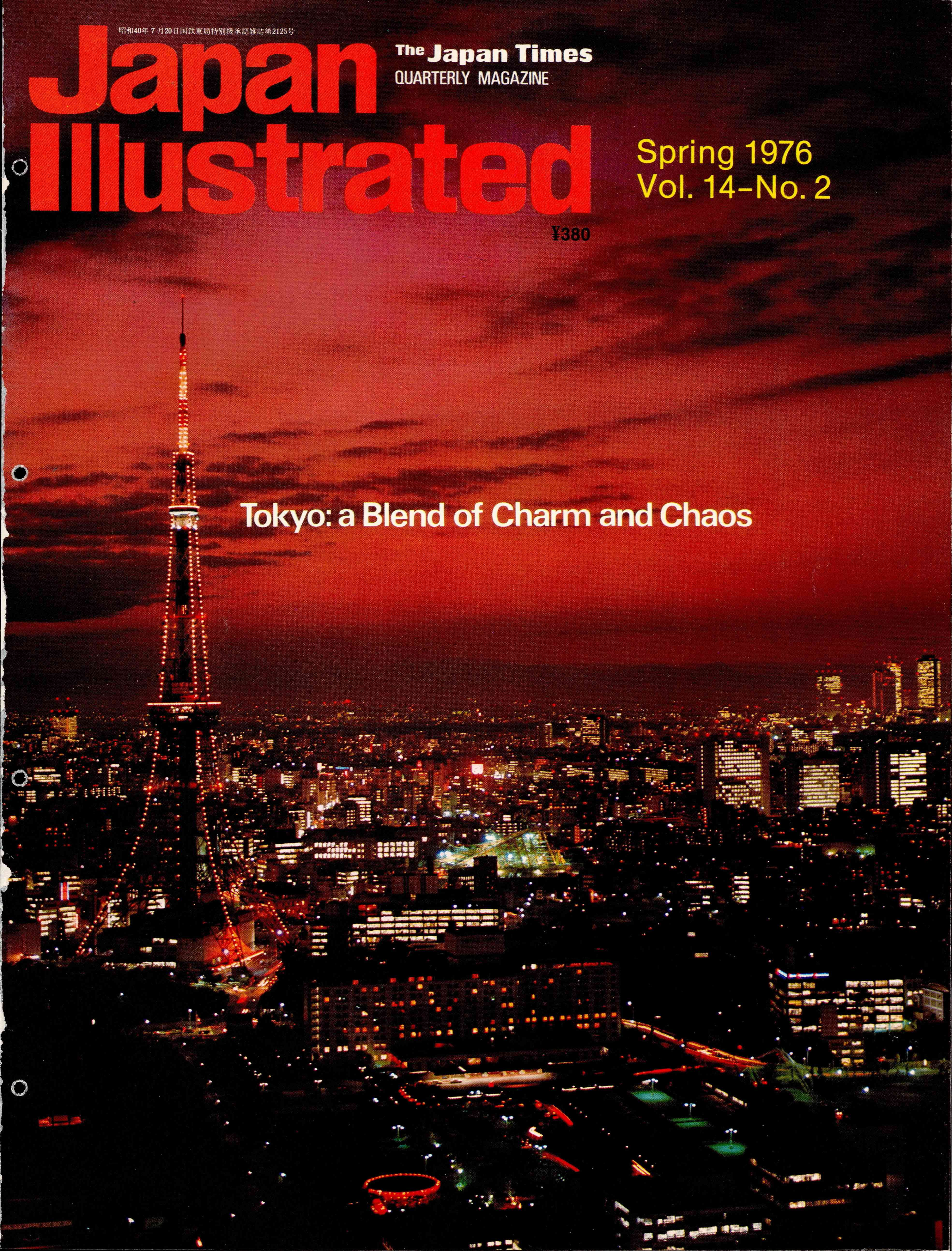
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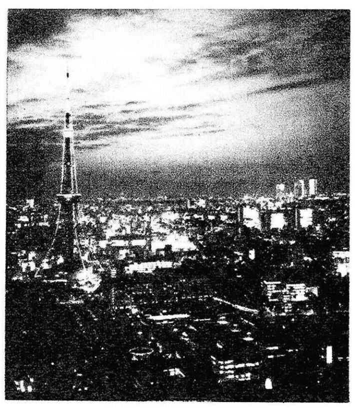


Tokyo: a Blend of Charm and Chaos

Japan Illustrated

April 1976 (Vol. 14, No. 2)

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Cover photo: Shimmering light turns Tokyo into a completely different entity at night. Soaring at left is the Tokyo Tower.

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Houn Ohara, Leader With

Headmaster Ohara concentrates on one of his creations.
His works become the models for his 1,300,000 followers.



1,300,000 Followers

By MASAMI SUZUI
Photos by MICHIO NOGUCHI



"Everyone loves flowers. People all over the world enjoy decorating their homes with flowers. Why, then, is it that the art of flower arrangement has flourished so noticeably only in Japan?"

"It's because," Headmaster Houn Ohara answers his own question, "the Japanese have lived with nature for so long. For centuries, they have made nature a part of their everyday life."

This tradition, according to the head of the Ohara School of flower arrangement, stands in contrast with the Western way of thinking that somehow human beings are in conflict with nature and that nature is something to be conquered by humans.

"This Japanese tradition has been fostered," Ohara suggests, "by the distinct changes of climate we have in Japan. As the cycle of the seasons revolves, we encounter and embrace a kaleidoscope of changing landscapes. Such an approach to the natural environment, I think, has promoted the view of nature peculiar to the Japanese people.



Natsuki Ohara (left), the Headmaster-Designate, helps his father at a demonstration session.

"In the Ohara School," he says, "we always tell our students to try well to perceive the ways of nature and to transfer this perception to flower arrangements. We observe nature and put the inspiration derived from it into the floral work so that the emotion thus embodied will, in turn, be impressed upon the observer. Flower arragement will be meaningless unless we obtain this effect," says Ohara.

This process, he admits, may be the same as in other artistic pursuits, such as painting and literature. "But what makes Ikebana different," he says, "is the fact that the materials we use are flowers and plants which are alive. These materials are the products of nature and are already beautiful as they are. In order to create a new type and form of beauty from what is already beautiful, it is not enough just to cut or twist the materials. This is the most difficult part of Ikebana. To produce a new beauty with already beautiful materials, the floral artist must have a keen aesthetic perception and imagination."

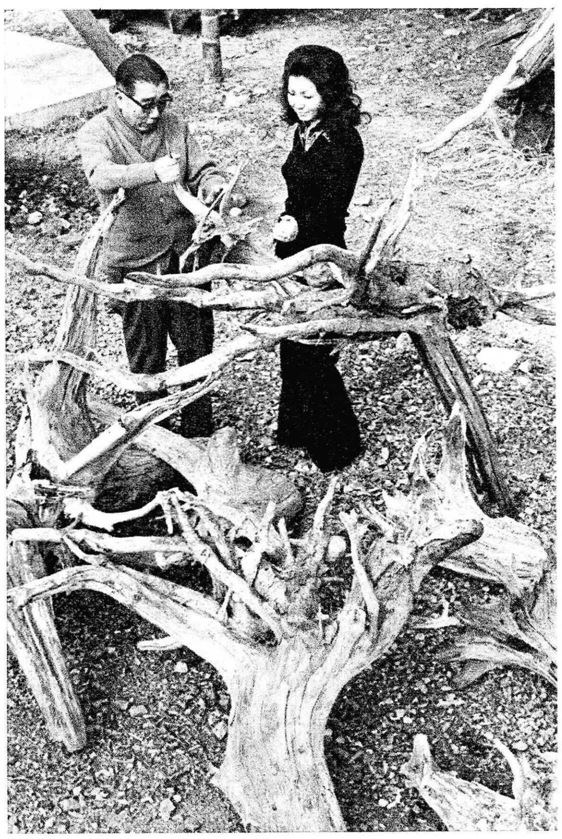
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Creative imagination has been a major driving force in Ohara's long artistic career. It was he who pioneered the movement for avant-garde Ikebana, using a variety of unconventional materials such as iron, glass, stones and even plastics — all unheard of in the world of traditional art of floral arrangement with a history dating back to the 15th Century. In the early postwar years, Ohara arranged joint exhibitions with other Ikebana schools. He even sponsored joint exhibitions with painters and tried his hand at stage setting for a ballet troupe.

Ohara's penchant for the novel manifested itself as early as 1939 when he sponsored a one-man exhibition titled "Ikebana and Oceanian Folk Art." In this show, he used primitive folkcraft articles of the South Sea islands. The experiment was acclaimed as a pioneering venture in the tradition-bound world of Ikebana. Soon afterward, however, World War II forced him into inactivity. He had to wait for better circumstances to resume his bold experiment.

As Japan's living standard rose rapidly and people began to learn how to enjoy life during the 1960's, Ikebana devotees increased by leaps and bounds. Ohara's growing fame and popularity helped promote a wide-spread fervor for the modern form of floral arrangement.

During this period, too, Japan's Ikebana cult found its way to the United States and Europe. Ohara frequently toured these new frontiers to propagate his cult among new foreign enthusiasts.



The Headmaster and his daughter, Wakako, select Ikebana materials in the yard near the Kobe headquarters building. Parts of withered trees and driftwood are indispensable materials for avant-garde Ikebana.



Headmaster Ohara offers flowers before the relief busts of his grandfather and father—Ohara School founder Unshin (right) and second Headmaster Koun—in the Iemoto Kaikan.

For example, appointed as a cultural envoy by the Japanese Government, he visited the Brussels World Exposition in 1958 to publicize floral art. He also took active part in the festival commemorating the quadricentennial of Rio de Janeiro in 1965.

Houn Ohara is the third-generation Headmaster of the Ohara School, a leader among Ikebana organizations in Japan. Born in Osaka in 1908, he succeeded to the headmastership in 1938 and has since helped invigorate the cult of Ikebana with revolutionary innovations. He is credited with building the Ohara School into what it is today — a massive organization with more than 90,000 licensed instructors and 1,200,000 students. He also has been a prime mover in propagating the art of flower arrangement abroad.

As an independent organization, the Ohara School of Ikebana is 81 years old, but its tradition is much older, dating back to the 15th Century, which also saw the birth of two other distinctive Japanese art forms, the Noh play and the tea ceremony. In its early years, Ikebana was a very elaborate, stylized art practiced by the ruling class of the day, such as the nobles, *samurai* and Buddhist priests.

As the merchant class gained power in the late 17th Century, however, flower arrangement became more popular, freer and more creative. It reached an earlier peak of popularity in the 18th Century, when the government encouraged the practice of this art form as a commendable accomplishment for women.

When the feudal system began to decay with the advent of the 19th Century, traditional cultures lost their vigor. Ikebana, too, lost its artistic creativeness, degenerating into a mere pastime, with its practitioners playing only with novelty and technical niceties.

Mid-way through that century, in 1861, Unshin Ohara, the founder of the Ohara School, was born. This was a period in which Japan was just moving from the feudal age into an exciting era of modernization. At the age of 27, Unshin took up sculpture. He also carried on Ikebana study which he had practiced from his younger days. He won recognition in both fields but decided to concentrate on floral arrangement when advised by doctors that really successful sculptural efforts required more physical strength than he had.

Not content with merely learning traditional Ikebana techniques, Unshin developed a new method of flower arrangement called *Moribana* — recreating natural beauty with flowers and plants set in a shallow, flat vase, a type of vessel never before used in traditional Ikebana. His one-man *Moribana*-oriented exhibition in Osaka in 1896 proved a great success, and *Moribana* has since become the main stream of contemporary Ikebana. The Ohara School was established that year.

Unshin was succeeded by his son, Koun. Although he started Ikebana training rather late, at the age of 25, Koun introduced many innovations to Ikebana teaching. A man of foresight, he sponsored as many Ikebana exhibitions as possible and exhibited *Moribana* arrangements at department stores and in display windows in illustration of his motto: "Out of the house and into the street." Koun was the first to offer "group lessons" to large numbers of followers in single sessions in place of the traditional master-student home teaching. He was also the first Ikebana master to write articles on floral arrangement for newspapers and magazines and to conduct Ikebana courses over the radio.

Upon Koun's death, in 1938, Houn took over as Headmaster. The Ohara School today is headquartered in Tokyo and Kobe, with 118 chapters in Japan. It also has two major Centers, in New York and Sao Paulo, and 22 full-membership chapters in as many countries abroad. Ably assisted by his son, Natsuki, and his daughter, Wakako, Houn Ohara reigns over this vast Ohara empire. Natsuki was named Headmaster-Designate last year. Wakako heads the school's International Division. The Headmaster also presides over the Japan Ikebana Association, the nation-wide federation of Ikebana schools. He is one of the three Founding Sustaining Flower Master Advisors to Ikebana International, a cosmopolitan organization of flower arrangement devotees.

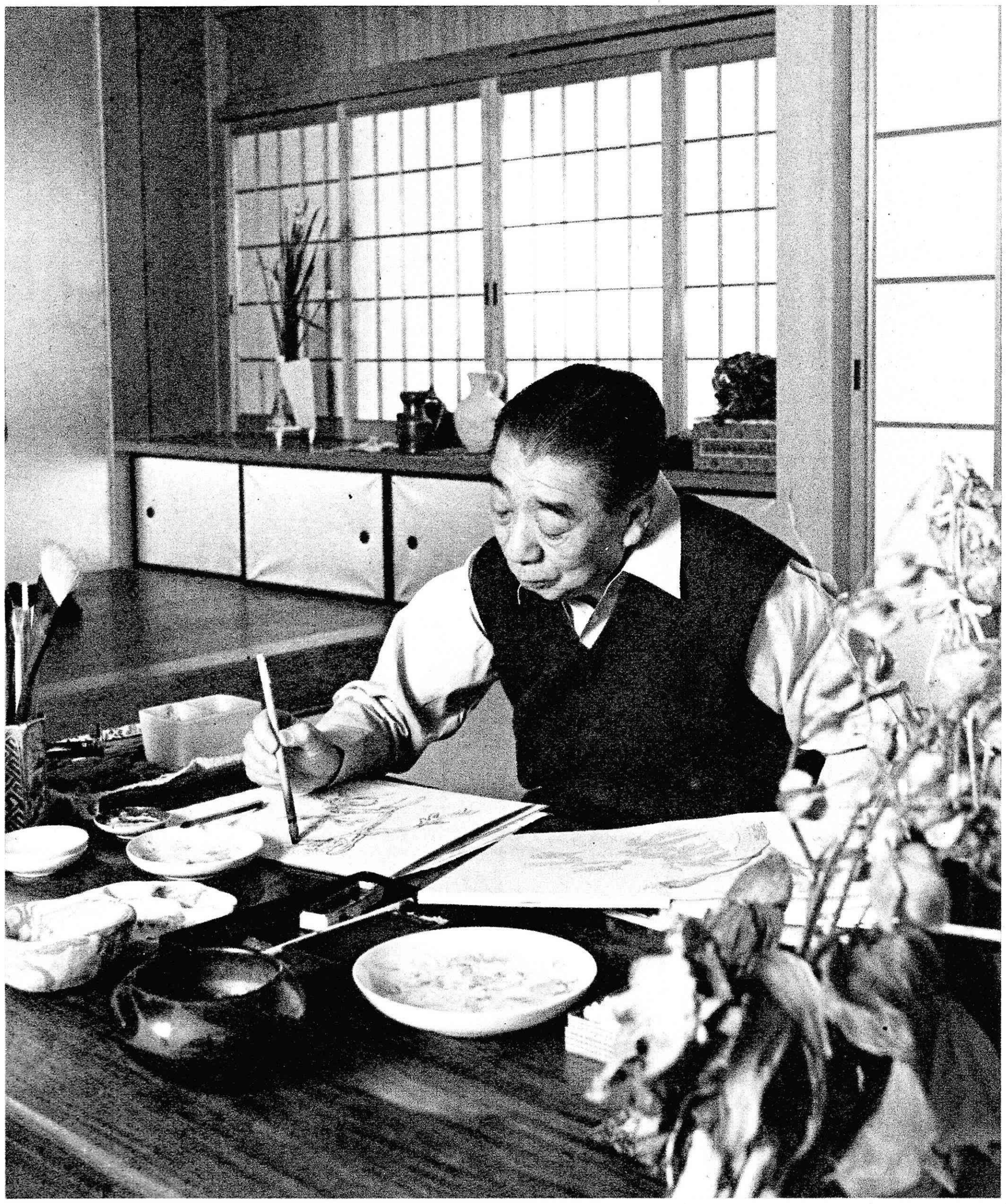
Ohara is scheduled to visit Washington, D.C. and other U.S. cities in April and May 1976 on an Ikebana demonstration tour for the North American Regional Conference of Ikebana International in commemoration of the U.S. Bicentennial. ●



Headmaster Houn Ohara of the Ohara School of flower arrangement at work in his spacious atelier in the Iemoto Kaikan, Kobe. Ohara originated the massive Ikebana style like the one shown here.



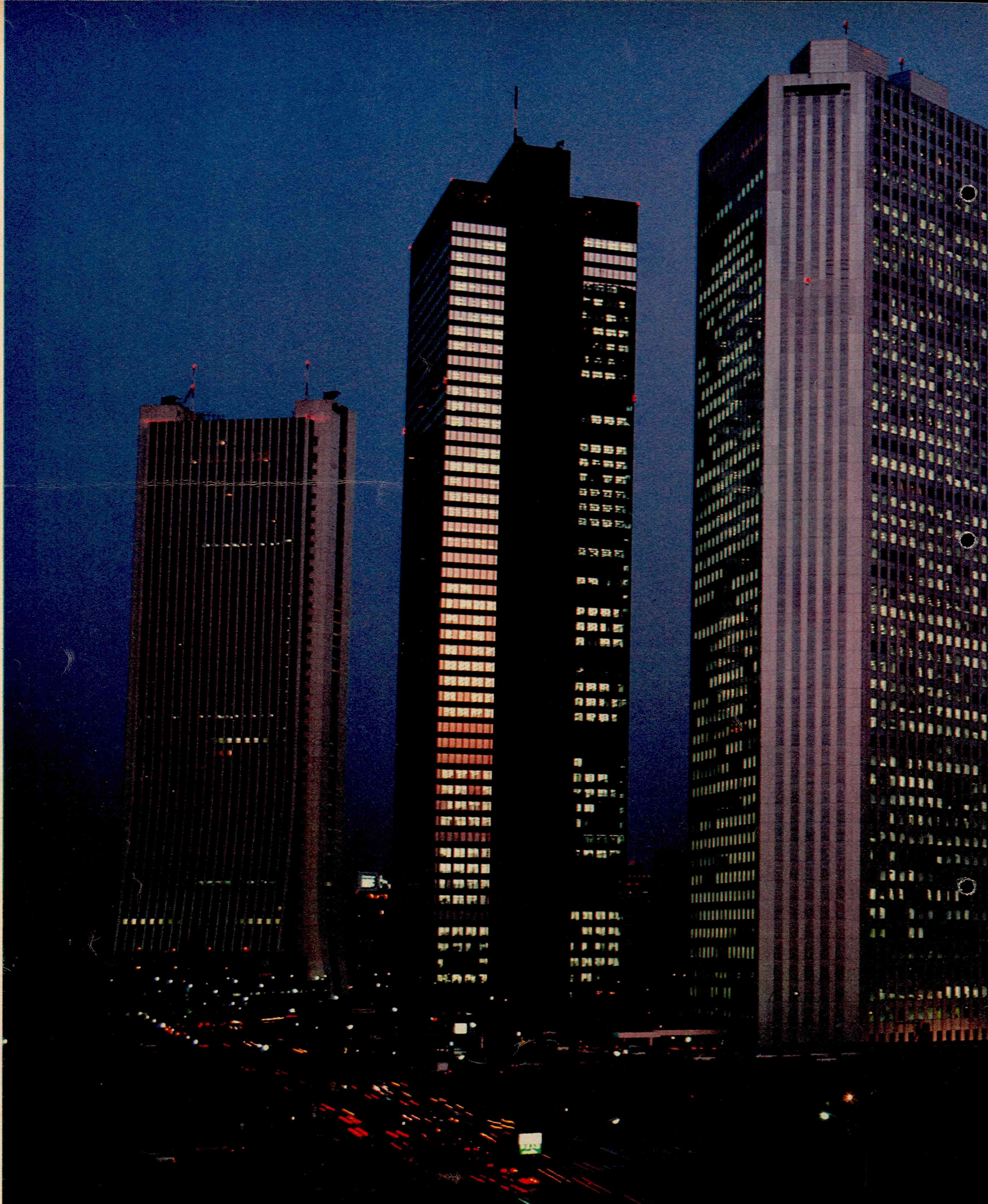




Top: The Oharas at the dining room of their Kobe home. L. to r.: Son Natsuki, Mrs. Ohara, the Headmaster and daughter Wakako. Above: Ohara examines a piece of Incan earthenware to draw ideas for his flower arrangement works. He is a renowned Incan pottery collector. His collection is housed in the Ohara Art Gallery adjoining the Iemoto Kaikan. Right: The Headmaster turns Japanese-style painter from time to time. His subjects are usually flowers and plants. Graduate of a horticultural school, Ohara is a keen observer of plant life.



Ohara strolling through the garden of his home, which is located in Kobe's Bluff overlooking the harbor.



Tokyo—the Modern



View

Photos by MASAMI SUZUI

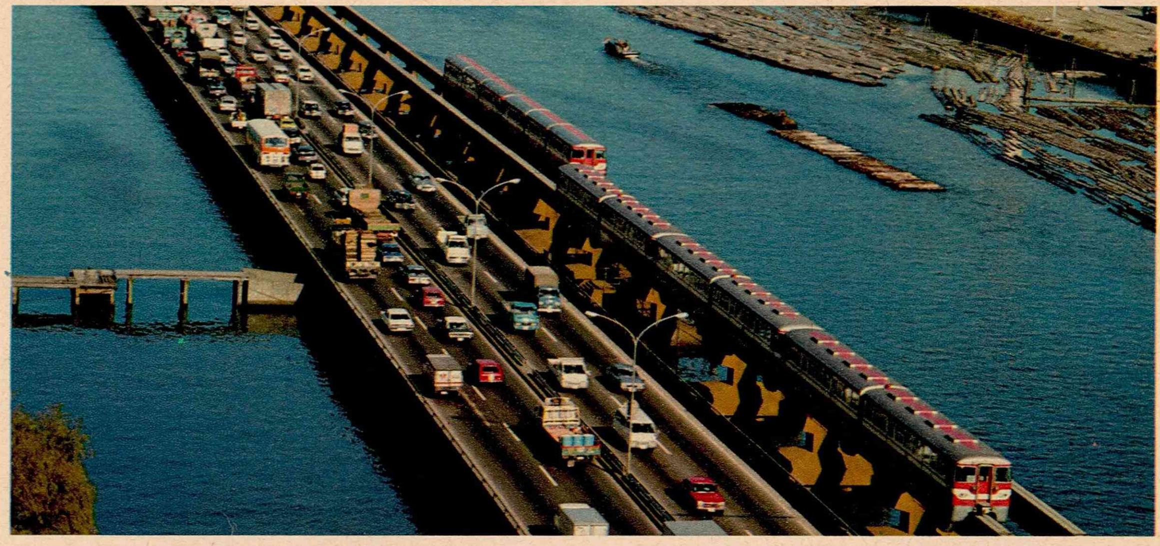
Tokyo now looks like the major world city that it is. The towers of Shinjuku, in the west of the city, a new major complex to which five more skyscrapers are shortly to be added.



Akasaka Mitsuke near the center of the city with towers of Shinjuku in the background, the state guest house, the Akasaka Detached Palace, and its grounds in the middle, and the marina annex of the Hotel New Otani in the foreground.



The center of the city, with the moat and plaza of the Imperial Palace at the upper left, Hibiya Park at the lower left, the Marunouchi business center in the upper middle and, below it, the recently reconstructed Imperial Hotel.



Right: The elevated highway and monorail connecting Tokyo with Haneda Airport. Below: Part of Tokyo's system of elevated highways, the Edobashi Interchange in the center of the city.





The River Sumida as it is today. The Ryogoku Bridge of the Metropolitan Highway. The one immediately upstream is the old Ryogokubashi.

The charm of what? Tokyo? — the graceless capital, largest city in the world and apparently least distinguished, home of twelve rushing millions, most of them born elsewhere, despair of the city planners and, according to Aldous Huxley, who hated it, the primordial ant-hill. Yet Tokyo does have its charm, though this is seldom where one might look for it and is never obvious.

What is apparent in Tokyo is a charmless accumulation of structures, myriads of them, which seem to have more accumulated than been constructed. The new and the fairly new are crowded together without apparent reason, occasionally interrupted by a chunk of the fairly old, and the effect of unfinished clutter is definitive.

Stuck here and there, like earlier geological outcroppings, are reminders of a varied past: the dusty Toshogu Shrine at Ueno, the few Meiji buildings left in Marunouchi, the Taisho-art-deco Lion Beer Hall on the Ginza — all swamped and inundated by Late Showa Moderne.

This general architectural style has no name but it might be called Tokyo Impermanent. Its general effect is that of an international exposition several years after it has closed. There are the same use of flashy materials, the urge to attract the eye for the moment, the inclination to sacrifice any idea of unity to an ideal of wild diversity the saving grace of which is that it is intended to last no longer than a season. Fairly recent examples would be the Toto toilet building on Ginza, the Shinjuku Joy-Pak building, the Almond coffee-shop chain and the Marui department stores.

The identifying air of impermanence is enhanced by the fact that the city is forever under construction — half of it is always being torn down while the other half is being put up. But then, Tokyo never pretended to be beautiful.

Beauty, after all, implies a certain balance, a certain repose. Just as there are no celebrated views in the city, neither are there famous beauty spots. This is tacitly understood by Tokyoites and much laughter was occasioned by an official objection to the Mitsui high-rise in the Marunouchi. It would, it was said, ruin the beauty of Tokyo's skyline. What beauty? asked the smiling editorials; what skyline? questioned the chortling weeklies.

Tokyo's modest skyline fluctuates like a fever chart, and is indicative only of the growth of a possibly benign tumor. It is indicative of the rate of movement — one hesitates to say progress — of the city itself.

'The Charms of Tokyo...'

By DONALD RICHIE

And right here, in this unlikely place, we find the charm of Tokyo — its amazing dynamism. The city is alive as are few others. It grows, changes, metamorphoses according to a law of its own. And in so doing it satisfies one of mankind's deepest cravings — the need for permanent change.

Life — man and his monuments — may be frozen into immortality, as are the pyramids of Egypt; or they may be eternally renewed, as are the shrines of Ise; or they may be allowed to evanesce. This is Tokyo's way. It is like Heraclitus' river, always different and therefore always the same. This combination is a deeply satisfying one. It is also disconcerting. Landmarks disappear overnight and empty land (the reservoir area of West Shinjuku) in a mere year becomes what appears to be a skyscraper-studded civic center, until one realizes that there is nothing civic about this city and, in any event, it has no center.

The charm of continual novelty is compounded by that of habitual uncertainty. Since Tokyo, despite the many opportunities offered by earthquakes and conflagrations, has always resisted the intentions of the tidy, city planner or not, the capital has never had a plan, nor even a completely reliable map. The streets wind as they will, emerge as they are able, stop as they must, and the wanderer shortly becomes lost. Kyoto one masters with a map and a free afternoon. Tokyo takes both years and an elephantine memory.

Much of the charm of Tokyo is the charm of the unexpected. If one wishes to be constantly reassured then one should not live here but in Kyoto or Kanazawa or Matsue. Tokyo can be unnerving because one never knows quite what to expect. The building that always told you where you were in particularly mercurial Ikebukuro suddenly disappears; one's favorite store or restaurant is one day replaced by a hole in the ground and a neat map — a month later the map is gone, the former establishment lost forever, and an entirely new building is up.

Such qualities, temporal and spatial, strongly affect the Tokyoite and create a new and attractive breed. The citizens of the capital, who live with this constant change, are different from those in the backwaters. Their interest in and insistence upon the new makes them more curious and open, the constant stimulation of the city makes them more active, and the anonymity of the largest city in the world makes them paradoxically freer.

Also, since the city lives on energy, Tokyo people tend to be frenetic, always rushing hither and thither, their lives often a precise opposite of some presumed reposeful ideal. If one finds energy charming, then this quality is one of the most charming things about Tokyo. Something is always going on, there is always something to do. Boredom — whatever else — need not be encountered in this galvanized metropolis.

Since one never knows quite what to expect one remains alert. Alertness is one of the qualities of the people of Tokyo. They may blindly bump into you on the street or, eyes filled to bursting, fail entirely to see you, because much of this energy is plainly undirected — it radiates and creates a folk designed to cope with and further create the metamorphosing monster inside which they live.

They also, understandably, get more tired than other Japanese. There is nothing wearier-looking than a weary Tokyoite. He falls asleep on the subway; he can slumber standing up. And, akin perhaps, he is much more given to nostalgia.

Tokyo's permanent impermanence makes it a very poignant city. Relics from the past, unaccountably undisturbed, recall earlier and always retrospectively better times. One of Tokyo's most typical citizens was the novelist Kafu Nagai who lamented the changes and celebrated the poignancy. He remembered a bit of old Edo and (the quote is from an early story) "could not bring himself into harmony with the vulgar clutter of Meiji, managed by ignorant foot-soldiers from Kyushu." Later works, however, find him in the midst of messy Taisho regretting Meiji itself. Toward the end of his life, much disliking sprawling Showa, he would with regret remember a tidier Taisho. And through it all he remained a typical active and inquisitive Tokyoite.

Certainly the gentle charm of nostalgia is not possible unless whatever is regretted has already almost entirely slipped from sight. It is then that a fabled past asserts itself and stagnant backwaters are searched out and admired. Tokyo still contains a number, rapidly diminishing. Sections of Asakusa and Senju have still not entirely succumbed; Tsukiji's Shintomi-cho area retains an early Taisho feeling; also parts of Yushima, near Ueno, and the old "temple town" centered near Gokoku-ji with its cemeteries and gardens still hold the last fragrance of Edo.

Not for long to be sure. Nostalgia is an uneconomical emotion and, though prized, is — like the famous old tree in the proposed housing project — the first thing to go. Other considerations reign and the bulldozer is called. Still, Tokyo is so vast and its growth is so haphazard that such pockets invariably remain. Across the street from the Namikiza movie theater in the heart of Ginza stands a small and somewhat dingy coffee shop. It is much frequented by the nostalgic because its decor has remained so completely Postwar Japan, ca. 1945. Mock-functional, with hard seats, khaki-cream color, doilies, it serves the bitter beverage of the period and, all unwittingly, a large portion of the astringent ambience of a period once merely endured but now rendered pleasantly nostalgic.

In contrast to such are whole stretches of a dazzling and untidy modernity. Omote-Sando, only recently a residential district, is now a collection of boutiques and snacks rivaling the Okinawa Exposition in its varied impermanence. Parade ground of the mod with their fringes and high-heels, their dark glasses and funky hats, it looks nothing like Japan but it somehow manages to look just like Tokyo. Glittering Roppongi, now a rather weathered stretch, has its panoramic elevators, its hamburgers, pizzas, and processed poultry quarters, its somewhat pathetic salute to the (European) past with its inns, its Scotch pubs, oak veneer doors and brand-new suits of ancient armor. Looking like a transplanted section of Chicago's Century of Progress Exposition, it too is typical of Tokyo in its tacky but flamboyant insistence upon the new.

Indeed, if Japan is the land of contrasts it so often advertises itself as being, then Tokyo is a distillation of that quality. Sold to modernity, it yet feels mildly nostalgic about its relics; fond of ease, one of the world's great cities to play it, it is also fiercely energetic, living out a work ethic that makes many another capital appear provincial; it offers anonymity and even privacy while at the same time being the most over-stuffed assemblage of human beings in the world.

The people of Tokyo, conditioned by these various pressures, galvanized by this alternating current, reveal within themselves the dichotomy of their city. The Tokyoite, curious, friendly, lonely, suspicious, enthusiastic, gregarious, and very human, is the only sight, the only beauty spot in the whole monstrous city. It is he who both creates and, indeed, is the charm of the place. If one admires energy and the ever-changing but changeless human pattern, then one admires Tokyo. Here the floating world remains visible still, its myriad patterns clearly discernible, its charm persisting yet. ●



Traditional Tokyo

Photos by ATSUSHI KAYADA

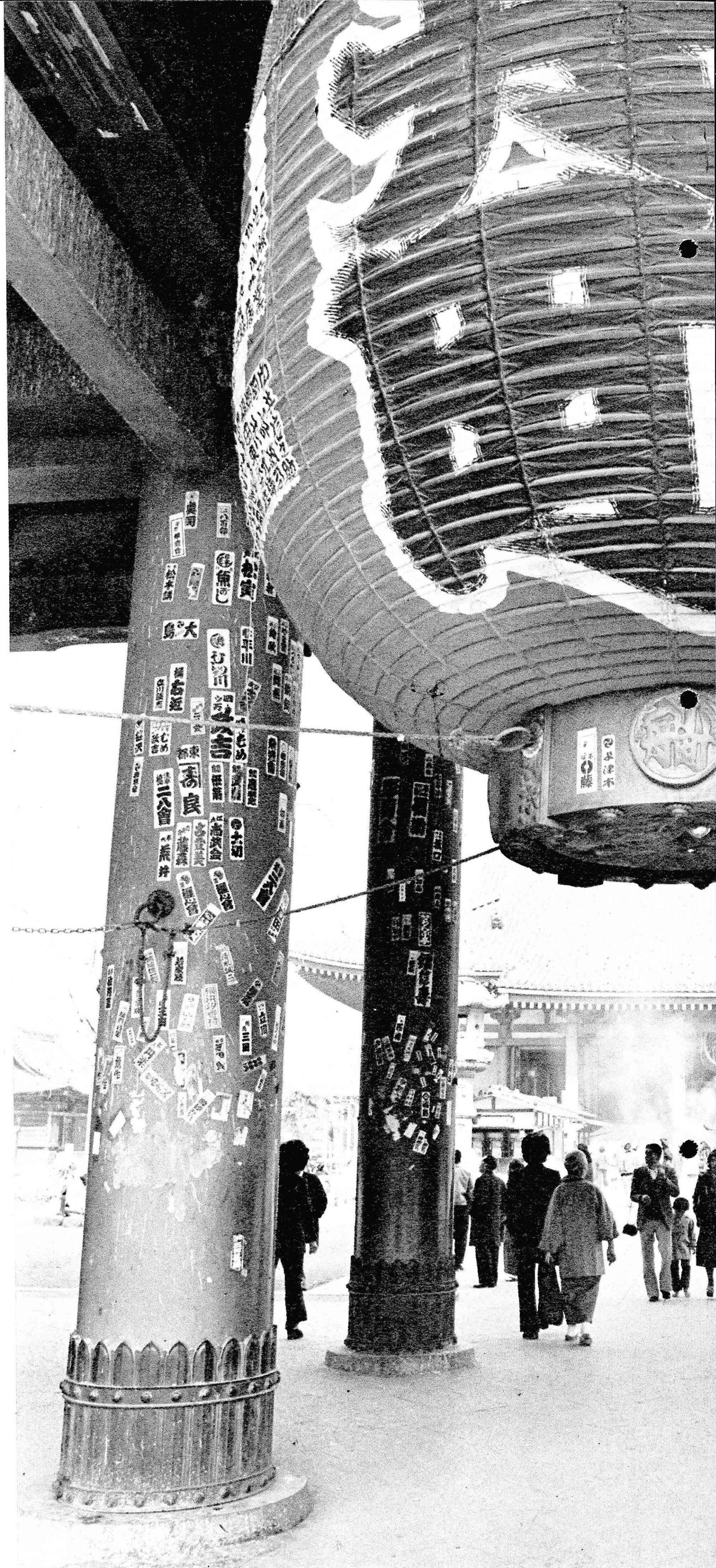


Tokyo still contains many reminders that it has been the traditional capital of Japan for almost four hundred years. Opposite page: A typical old store-residence in Tsukudajima on the Sumida River. Above: A traditional restaurant front in Asakusa in the north of the city.

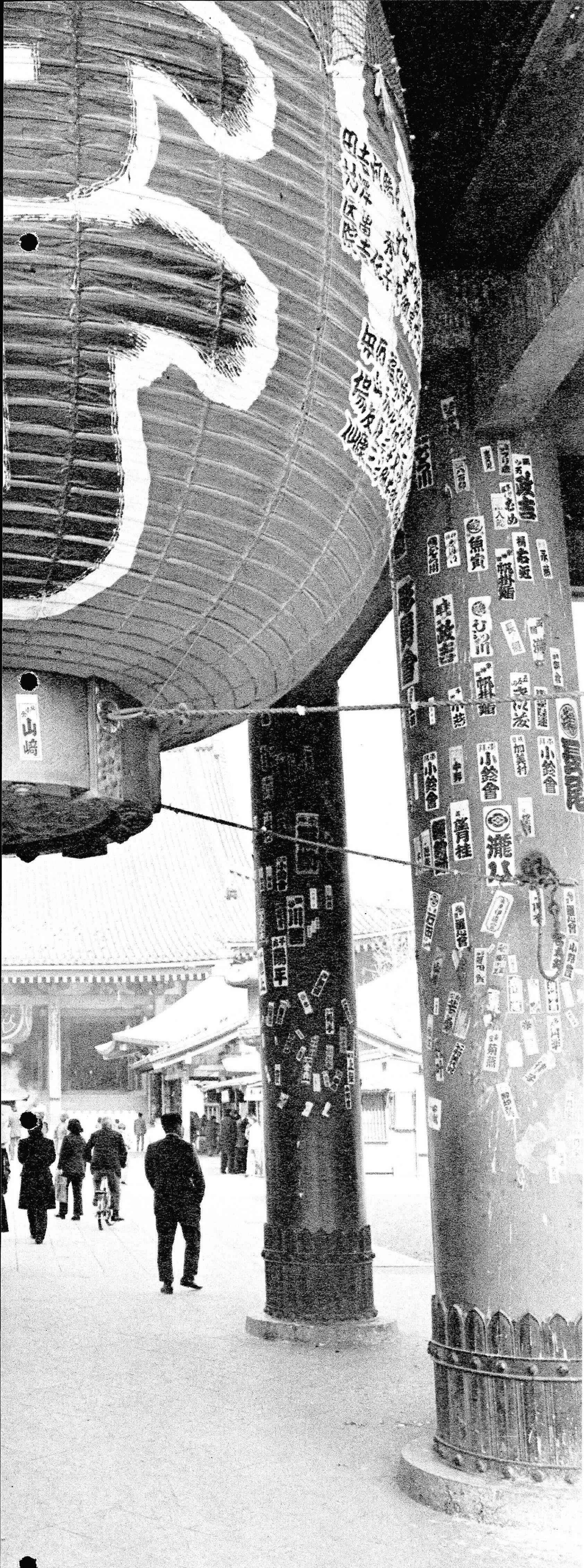




Top: The many-gated entrance to the Inari Shrine in Ueno.
Above: The lanterned old Yushima Tenjin Shrine in Kanda.

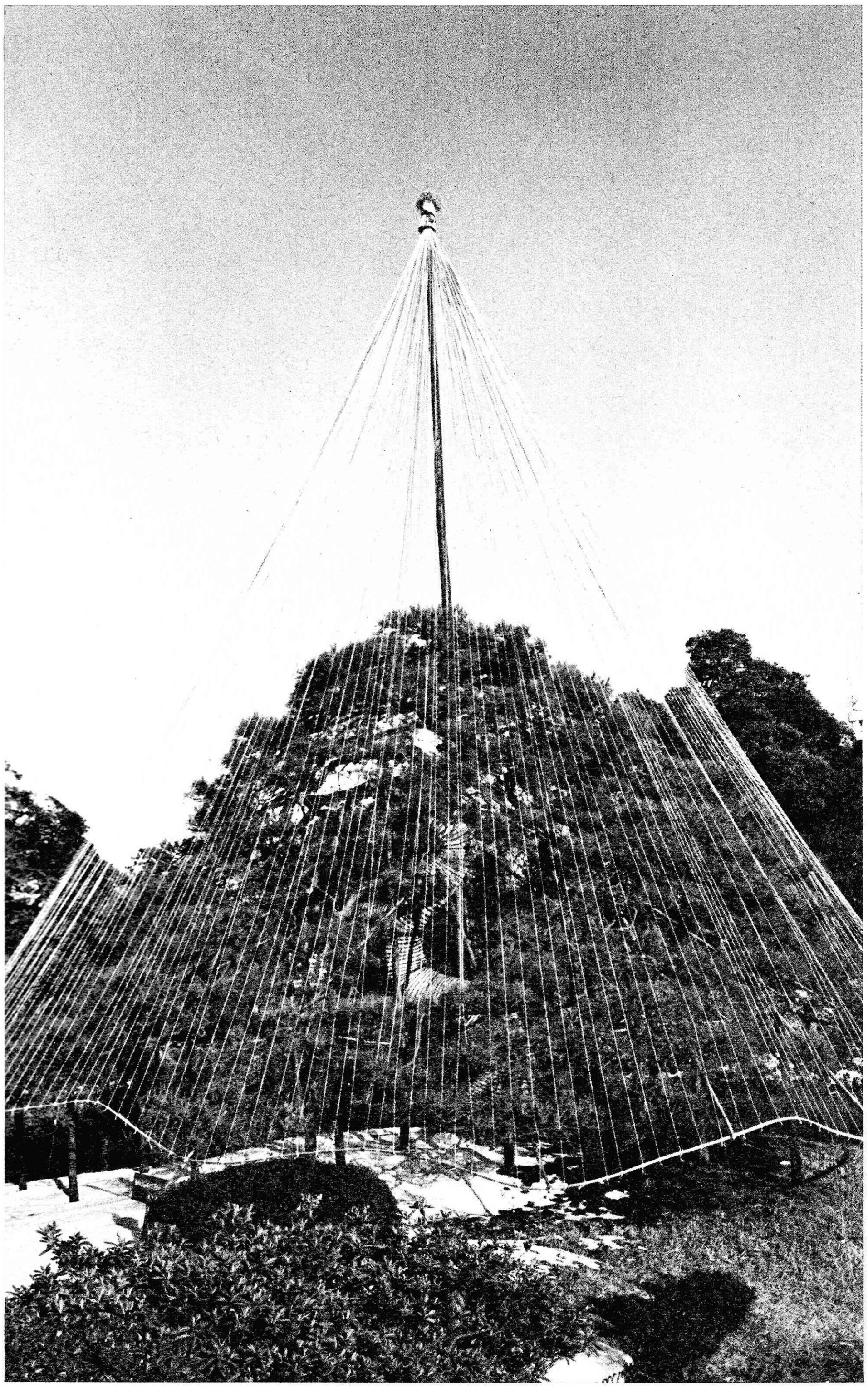


The great lantern and inner gate of the Asakusa Kannon Temple in Asakusa.





One of the remaining few of Tokyo's pagodas, this one, is Ueno's Toshogu Shrine, is now designated an Important Cultural Asset.





Scenes of old Tokyo. Above: A "yuki-zuri," traditionally raised to keep the snow from crushing the trees. This one is in the formal gardens of the Rikugien in Komagome. Above right: A corner of the Imperial Palace, the section called Fujimi Yagura because of its fine view of the distant Mount Fuji. Right: The "torii" gateway to the Yushima Tenjin Shrine in Kanda.







Left: The Kuromon or Black Gate of the old Ikeda residence in Ueno. All are living reminders of Tokyo's past.

Tokyo Artisans

Photos by YASUO KUBO

Hidden behind Tokyo's glittering facade, there are a number of small workshops where artisans ply their trades that date back to the days when Japan was a closed country with little contact with the outside world.

These nooks, usually no more than so many shacks both in appearance and dimensions, have survived the trend of modernization set in motion a century ago.

The articles manufactured there are items of no great monetary value — clogs, combs, wood-and-paper folding fans, bamboo-and-brass smoking pipes, dyed cloths, wooden tops, plaited cords, old-fashioned brooms, etc.

The artisans who make these wares are a dying breed, with few apprentices willing to take over their trades. They have remained too proud to climb on the postwar tourist shopping bandwagon, which might have helped to promote the sale of their products.

Most of these people have held on to the idea that special skills are a sure guarantee for reasonable livelihood, if not affluence, anywhere and in any age. Their sons, taller and better educated than their parents, think differently.

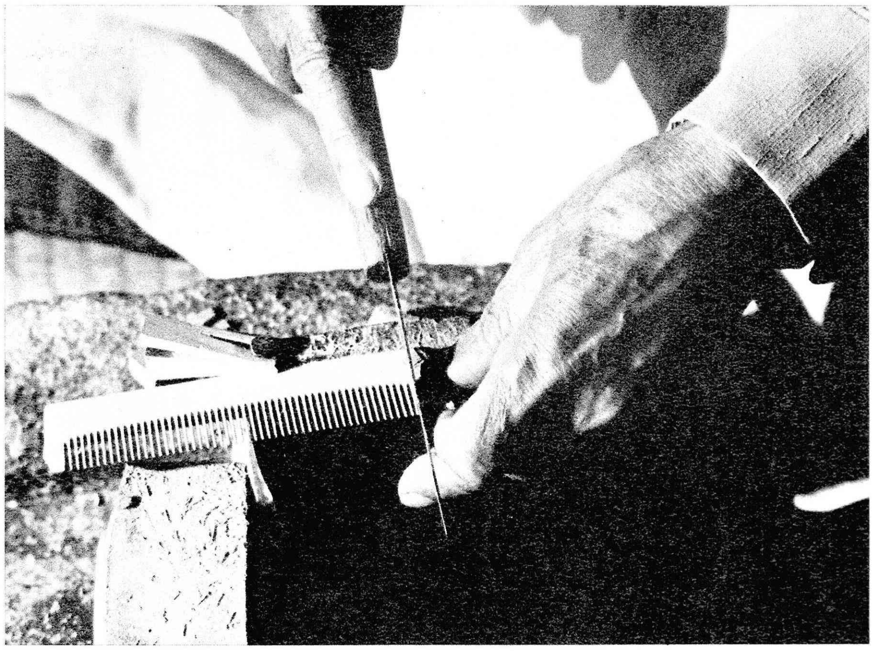
An interested photographer has toured downtown Tokyo on a sentimental journey and come up with these studies.

By WAKO BONO



Clog workshop.









Top in the process of manufacture.

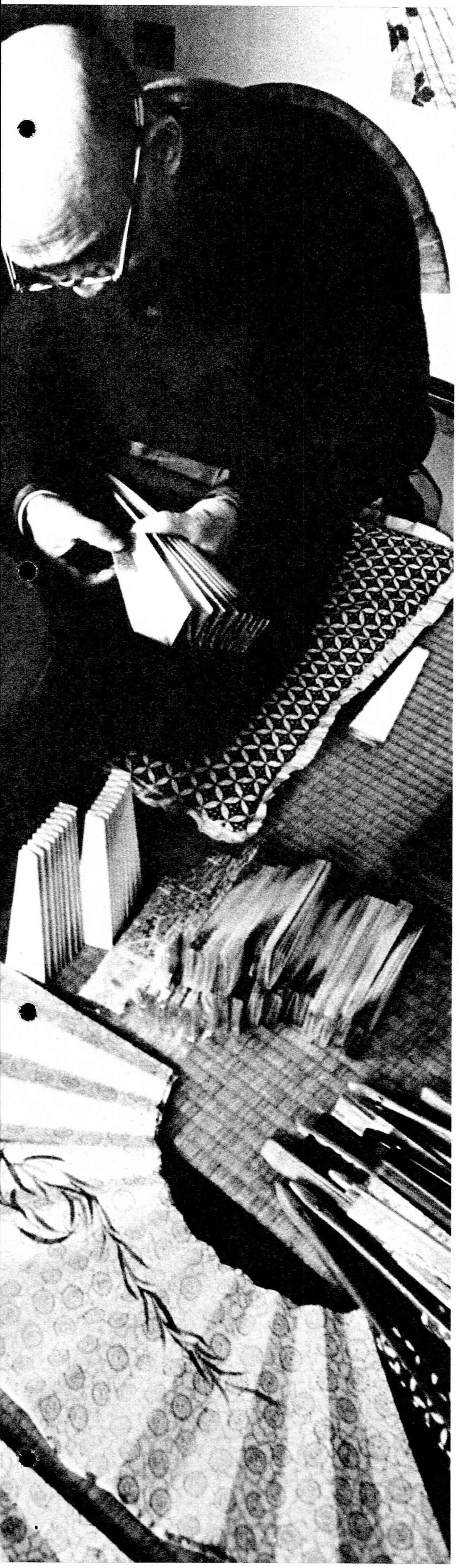
Comb-making calls for dexterous hands.

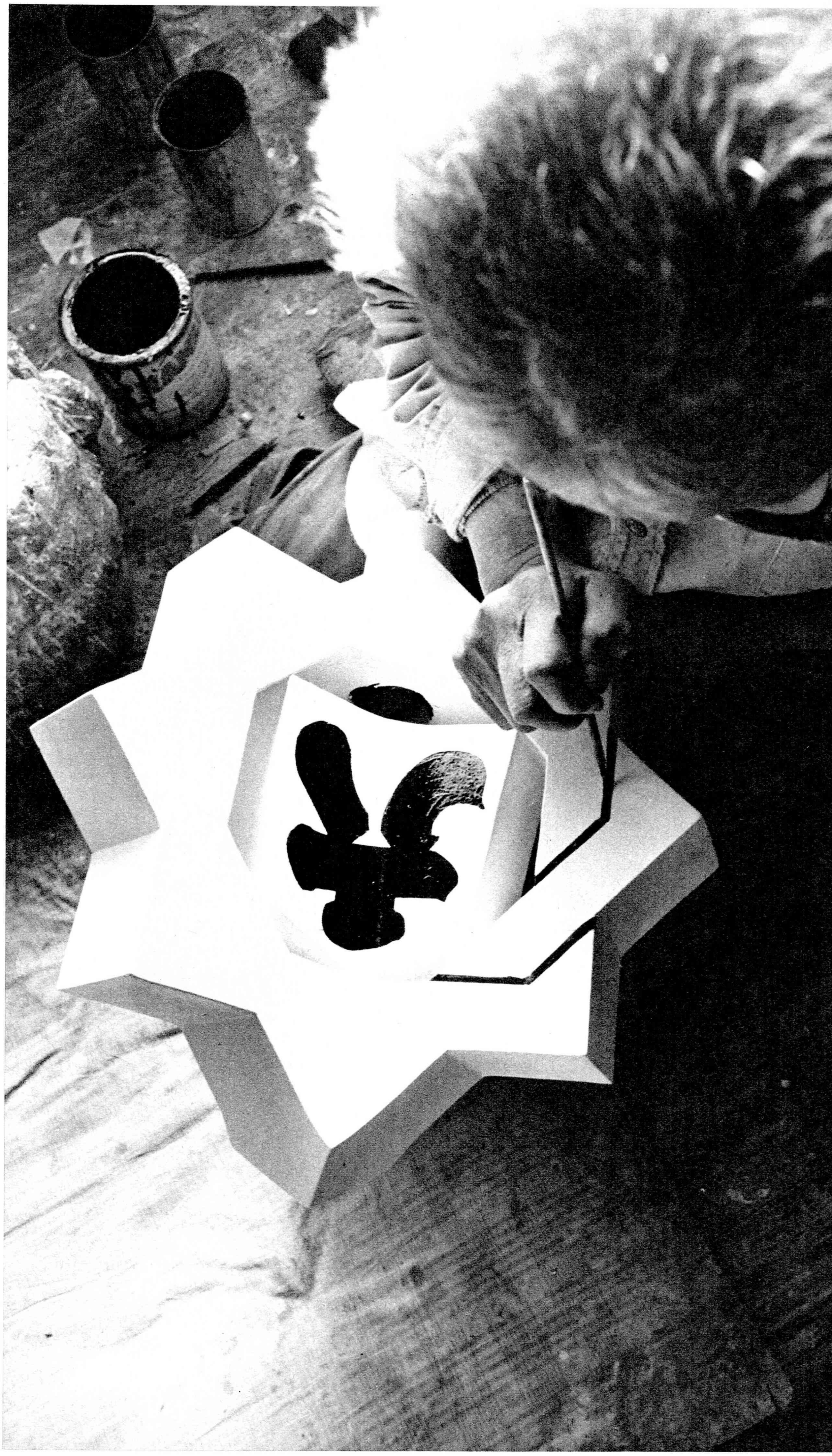


Couple at work making plaited cords.



Folding fans, essential paraphernalia for Japanese dancing, are fine specimens of decorative art.





Artisan paints a fireman's standard.



Kimono cloth hung to dry in the sun.

Inner cities of Tokyo

By RON BRANDON   Photos by NOBUAKI FUKUI



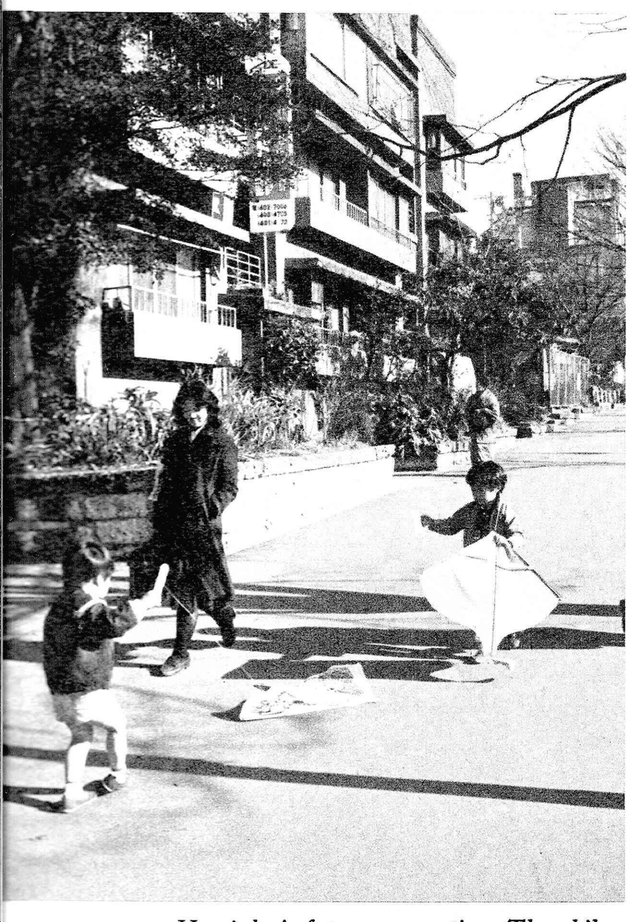
Subterranean jeans shop offers you a chance to make your jeans come true.

Tokyo sprawls. You soon forget miles and kilometers. Here you measure distance by the time it takes to travel by taxi or train. The train always wins. The enormity of the city kills any idea of knowing it all. Instead the weblike maze of tangled streets and alleys gives birth to city centers within the city. Not the burgeoning amusement areas that feed off the masses of humanity that jam the trunk lines passing through from the suburbs, but clusters of bright urban personality — destinations in themselves. Mostly sitting astride crossroads of what were once merely cowpaths lie the inner cities of Tokyo.

In another age, visitors to Edo (Tokyo's former name) made camp at a way-station just outside the capital's walls in preparation for the entrance through the fabled city's gates. Hundreds of years later, Harajuku has stopped being a stopover and is bent on taking a lead in setting the fashion trend for Japan's youth and youthful. The atmosphere ranges from hip bargain bazaar to cool-cool *l'elegant.* But, the emphasis is on atmosphere and plenty of it.



The fit is everything and the professional touch makes it happen just right.



Harajuku's future generation. The children always make it feel like home.

The heavy rock pouring from the high-powered woofers attacks the senses as you walk past the street level stalls. One less fortunate shop hidden up an alley places a fully dressed mannequin in the middle of the sidewalk. Its plastic eyes whisper the promise of a discount, so up the alley you go. For the well-heeled (in Harajuku that can mean shoes as well as money), the superstars of the European designer galaxy play "dazzle the eyes." Of course, an appropriately outrageous premium is tacked on, so even if you have trouble distinguishing the quality, the price tag will help. Around the corner, the local fashion "heavies" generate their own brand of star-shine at equally astronomical prices.

Strolling down Omote-sando the pace relaxes a bit. The universally understandable laughter of moon faced children follows you as you take a moment to browse among the antiques and the old-tiques. A thirteenth century Buddhist scroll for a few million yen or a hand-painted '30's necktie for a few hundred. The artist's styles collide in time.

Standing on the corner of Aoyama-dori, the raucous scream of jackhammers hastens your step. All day — everyday — work on the subway pushes on. Rushing to be ready for the next rush hour. The broad boulevard takes you toward Akasaka, but not without blinding you with a rainbow of color. The boutiques, the flower shops — in competition with the sun. A coffee shop offers you the time of day with your cup of fresh ground Mocha blend. The walls are lined with turn of the century pendulum clocks. They're for sale and, if you liked your coffee, so are the coffee beans.

As a landmark, the thick granite walls of the Crown Prince's palace loom ominous in contrast to the uniformed joggers making their circuitous rounds. Uniformed riot police post a sullen watch in wait for their rendezvous with the mercurial urban guerilla. Heading south down Shinsaka, the taxi slides smoothly through the sea of lumbering construction equipment, thousands of cars and other sliding taxis.

On the map, it's just a crossroad, but as you take the curve at Nogizaka in Formula I style the feeling in the air changes. Maybe it's the sheer mass of blazing neon that charges the atmosphere and everything in it. Five major arteries and countless sidestreets obey its magnetic pull and deliver their charges into this concrete whirlpool. You're in Roppongi.

Here, Tokyo's most huggable hips punish the seams of their jeans in rythm with the pulsating sidewalk symphony. Here, the emphasis is on satiating the appetites. Gourmet french restaurants that would devour the monthly wage of a *la Bourse* salary man demand reservations three days in advance. The boutiques stay open 'til midnight and a make-believe Japanese country style inn dishes up things from the depths of the sea on a five-foot serving board.

Foreign embassies and residential enclaves stand by as spectators on Roppongi's ever shifting perimeters making it the focal point of international cuisine in Tokyo.

There are more different types of eatables in more different types of eateries than anywhere else in town. Snack shops that serve just that. Chinese emporiums that boast enough varieties to be inscrutable even for a mandarin. Softly lit cocktail bars where sloe-eyed misses will fill your glass with whiskey and leave you thirsting for much more.

The most famous rendezvous in Tokyo (Japan?) where young lovers sip their lukewarm coffee and anxiously count the seconds 'til the arrival of their sweethearts. A traffic cop's whistle shrills (it's actually a tape recording linked by computer to the signals), a portion of Roppongi's population moves off their sidewalk perches and like a heart pumping blood, the cycle starts over again. ●



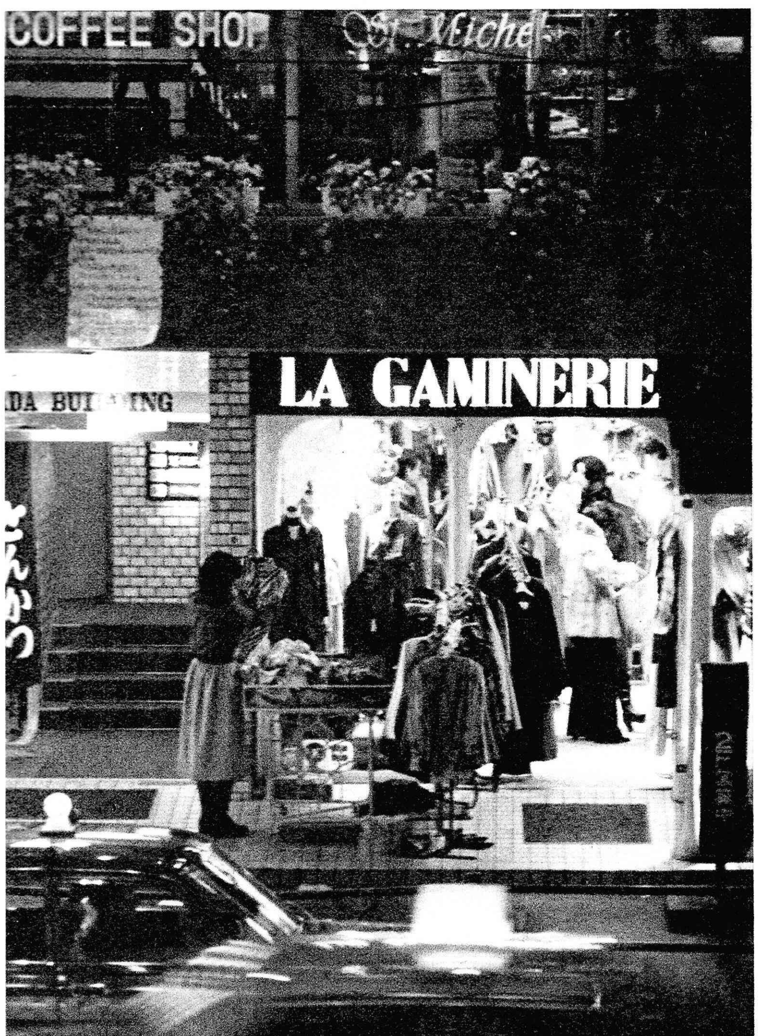


Above: Astride Harajuku's crossroad, fashion for the body and salvation for the spirit. Left: An afternoon on the mall. A piece of nostalgia and the latest trend in fashion join hands in Harajuku.

I write the songs that make the young girls cry.











Shoppers browse slowly as traffic flashes by.

Some of the boys looking for the girls looking for the boys, etc.

Have a little fun, do a little dance, get down tonight.





Up the street a little, the sounds that rock the night are created all day long.

Sidewalk entrepreneurs display their wares for bargain hunters strolling down from Harajuku Station.





Left: In Roppongi, the music plays and you boogie all night long. Below: The constant flow of traffic paints an abstract path through the heart of Roppongi.





The flow of a stream is portrayed on a black lacquer tray with a feather cut jaggedly on one side.

Suna-e—the Evanescent Art

By MASAYUKI ISHIDA

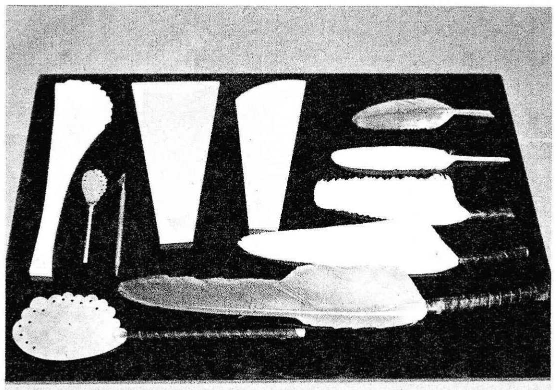
Photos by ATSUSHI KAYADA

A "sandy beach dotted with green pine trees" is so typical of the Japanese people's traditional sense of beauty that the phrase is already a cliche in literary expression. Sand, along with *tama-jari* (whitish gravel) is an indispensable element of Japanese shrines, gardens, *Bonseki* (the art of miniature landscaping) and so forth.

Suna-e (the art of sand painting), revived by Mrs. Kashu Yoshikawa of Tokyo after the war, also originated in the Japanese people's unique aesthetic sense about "white sand."

Foreign readers, already aware of that distinctively Japanese art *Bonsai* (miniature potted trees), may not know about *Bonseki*. In *Bonseki*, small rocks, pebbles and sand are arranged on a tray to suggest landscapes and gardens. It is said that some of the most famous gardens in Kyoto were first conceived in miniature on *Bonseki* trays.

Mrs. Yoshikawa began her study of *Bonseki* when she was 13 years old and received her teaching certificate four years later. About that time, she began to study *Ukiyoe* painting. She had already learned flower arrangement and tea ceremony. Mrs. Yoshikawa, however, was not satisfied with her achievements.



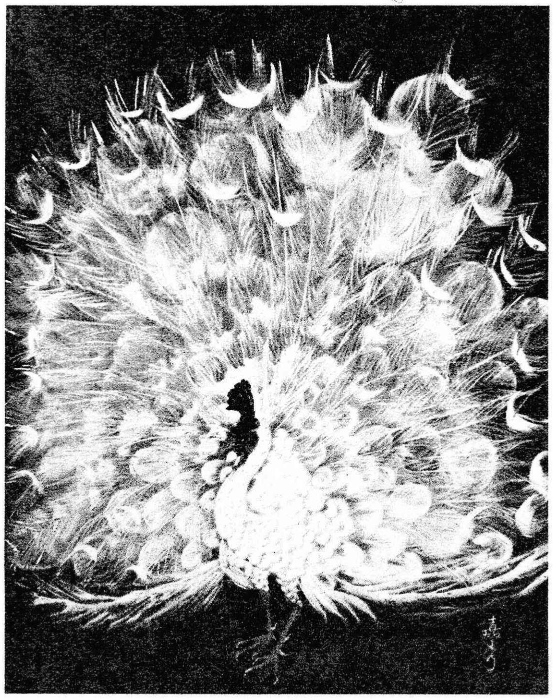
Implements used in "Suna-e." The Wooden spatulas borrow their shapes from scepters carried by officials in ancient Japan. Swan feathers are used mainly to remove unnecessary sand from the tray. When the tray is larger, hawk feathers are used.

Shortly after World War II, she frequently visited the National Diet Library to study more about the origin and history of *Bonseki*, her prime interest at the time. While checking ancient records at the library, known for an abundance of reference materials, she was enthralled by a story she found in Japan's oldest history book.

Emperor Tenmu, the 40th monarch who reigned from 673 to 686 A.D., lived in seclusion on Mt. Yoshino near Asuka, then the capital of Japan, before he ascended the throne. According to the story, he made it a pastime to depict natural objects with sand placed on a tray, by using a scepter and feathers of an arrow.

This was the origin of *Suna-e*, which fascinated Mrs. Yoshikawa.

In the Heian Period (781-1185 A.D.), life in the Imperial capital of Japan reached, for the aristocratic class, an unparalleled level of sophistication and artistry. Among the many elegant pastimes which became popular was *Suna-e*. On such occasions as blossom-viewing parties in spring



A peacock depicted in sand.

and moon-viewing banquets in autumn, aristocrats enjoyed composing poems, and impromptu *Suna-e* was used to add an elegant touch to their poetic works. This custom was considered an important form of social hospitality.

But the elegant custom waned and disappeared from social life as Japan came under the rule of *samurai* or warriors.

"I regret this," Mrs. Yoshikawa said, "but, perhaps, it couldn't be helped after all, because *Suna-e* was essentially an impromptu creation based on a passing fancy of the moment."

Nevertheless, she was sorry that such a traditional art vanished with the passage of time, and made up her mind to revive it by all means. *Suna-e* works were produced with sand on flat lacquer trays, and therefore, could not be moved or preserved. Therefore, not a single *Suna-e* now remains as an ancient work of art, and so Mrs. Yoshikawa had nothing to rely on but ancient records.

However, her assiduous study and research based on such data, which took more than 20 years, finally brought *Suna-e* back to life.

In ancient times, *Suna-e* was produced on black lacquer tray mainly with white sand plus a small amount of natural sand with light color. But Mrs. Yoshikawa invented a method of burning the colors into pulverized marble after repeated chemical tests with the cooperation of dyeing experts because sand can't be dyed. The new method has made it possible to produce vividly and evenly colored sand.

Moreover, she has devised a method of fixing and preserving *Suna-e* without damaging the original touch and force of the picture, making it possible to retain the beauty of impromptu *Suna-e* permanently.

The "Yoshikawa *Suna-e*" thus created is a very colorful one using 12 basic colors and more than 30 mixed colors. It is now possible, moreover, to decorate rooms with framed *Suna-e* or to cover the wall with *Suna-e* as a new form of mural.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Yoshikawa has never ceased to pursue the impromptu beauty of *Suna-e*. She is now so skilled in this art that she can produce *Suna-e* on a 90 cm. by 180 cm. lacquer tray in only three minutes by using hawk feathers and wooden spatulas. She unhesitatingly says that more than 20 years of training and study emerge crystallized in this brief space of time.

The Yoshikawa *Suna-e* was introduced abroad for the first time at a New York gallery in September 1962. Later, in October 1964, her art was demonstrated before the delegates to an annual session of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Tokyo, winning high acclaim among them. In February 1967, she toured various parts of the United States as a cultural envoy at the invitation of the Japan Art Center, headquartered in San Francisco (dissolved later). On that occasion, she was awarded a key to Sacramento, Calif., by Mayor Walter Christensen and received honorary citizenship. In 1969, she made a demonstration tour of the U.S. and Europe together with the overseas PR Caravan for the Japan World Exposition in Osaka (Expo '70), winning enthusiastic applause wherever she went. In recent times, she has traveled abroad (mainly the U.S.) annually to disseminate *Suna-e*.

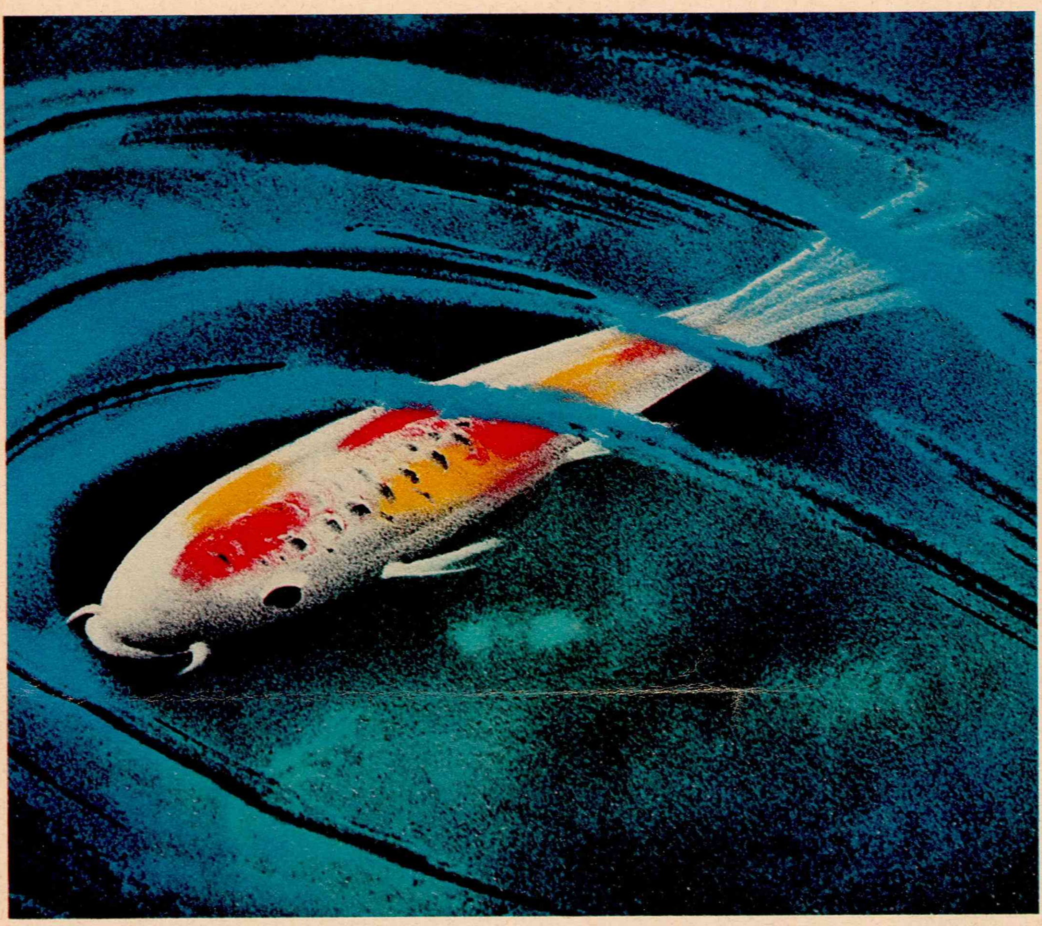
In Japan today, there are 14 *Suna-e* artists, who have received training from Mrs. Yoshikawa and are now skilled enough to serve as instructors. In addition, more than 200 persons are enjoying the art as a pastime. Of late, it is said, a growing number of people have taken to *Suna-e* in California and Hawaii.

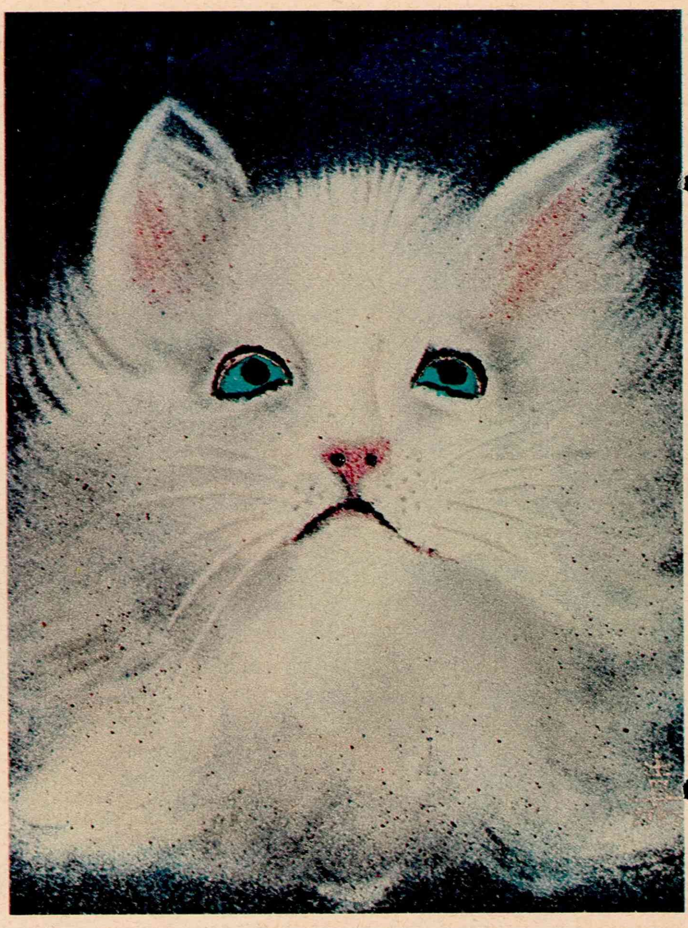
Mrs. Yoshikawa says:

"In a word, *Suna-e* is a mode of etiquette for welcoming the guest. Its essence lies in depicting whatever comes to mind extempore. I'm glad that an increasing number of people are now learning this art to enjoy the touch of sand and at the same time, entertain the guests, without minding at all whether the *Suna-e* picture will turn out good or poor." ●

Surrounded by her tools and drawers of sand, Mrs. Kashu Yoshikawa demonstrates how to "paint" a stand of bamboo.

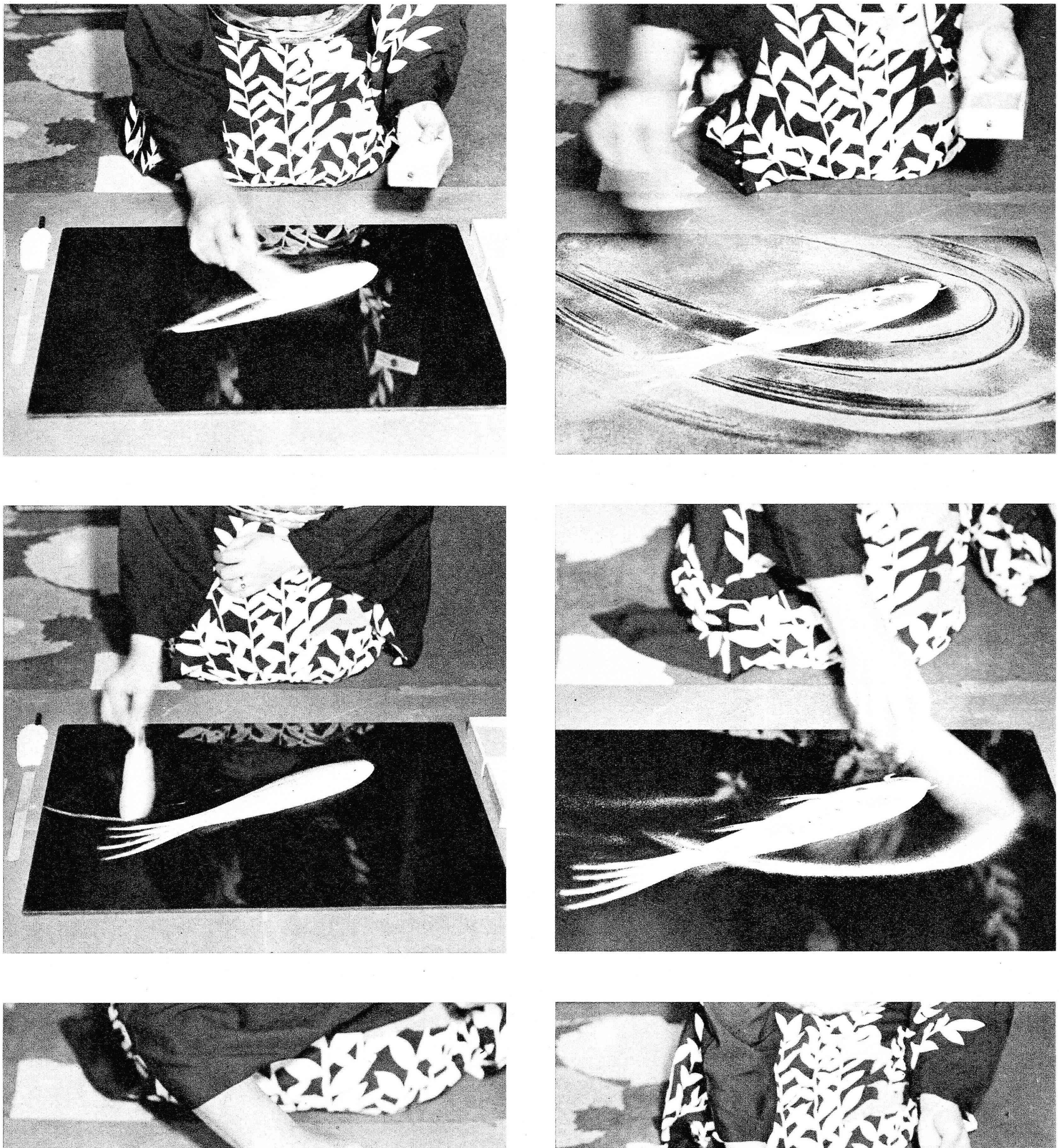








Top left: Mrs. Yoshikawa completed this work in just one minute. The process is shown on the opposite page. Top right: A work that decorates the wall of Mrs. Yoshikawa's guest room. Above: An imaginary composition showing a feudal-age artist practicing sand picture drawing as her friends look on.



Sand picture is drawn in the sequence as
shown in these photographs (counterclockwise from top-left).
The completed work also appears in color on Page 36.



Yuki Matsuri: the Big Winter

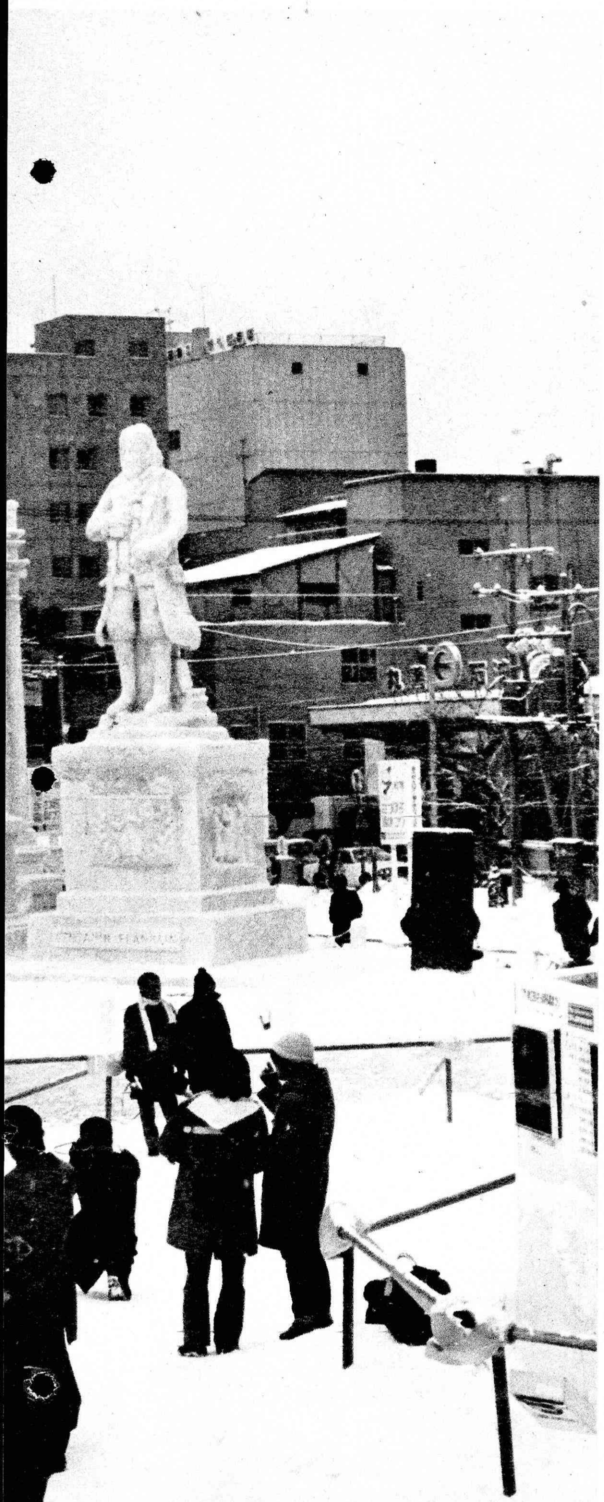
Story & photos by KARIN FABER

One of Japan's most popular festivals and certainly its biggest winter event is the annual Sapporo Snow Festival.

Held in Hokkaido's largest city during the first week in February, *yuki matsuri* as the Japanese call it, attracts every year more than 2 million visitors from all over Japan and from abroad. This year, a record crowd of 830,000 people visited the festival on the first day it opened.

What began 27 years ago as nothing more than a midwinter snowmen contest among the citizens of Sapporo, gradually gave way to more sophisticated ice and snow sculptures by local artists. These now include replicas of familiar figures in politics, the arts, history and show business. So numerous are the sculptures every year and some of them so tall, that tons of snow are brought into the city by truck. And with the help of bulldozers the snow is piled up and left to harden before the sculpting begins. Even skilled cooks from local hotels and restaurants who could turn simple blocks of ice into graceful swans, flowers and birds to serve as table center pieces at parties and receptions began to participate in the popular annual event by contributing larger and ever more elaborately carved examples of their artistic skills. Over the years these have included everything from life-size leaping Lippizan horses and romantically illuminated fairytale castles, to fancy birds of paradise, perched on large sculpted blocks of ice ready to take off on an imaginary flight.

Every year the snow festival is held simultaneously at two sites: In downtown Sapporo and outside the city at Makomanai, the spacious grounds of Japan's Self Defense Forces. This site is traditionally dedicated to the children who find here snow-sculptures of their favorite TV and fairytale characters and huge snow slides for which the youngsters enthusiastically queue up in sub-zero weather.







Show

Above left: In commemoration of U.S. Bicentennial, this year's snow festival featured an "American Square," which included this 12-meter high replica of the U.S. Capitol and Statue of Liberty as well as statues of George Washington and Benjamin Franklin.

Top: Also featured was this 10-meter high replica of the White House with a statue of Abraham Lincoln. Above: This snow and ice sculpture commemorates the Winter Olympics held in Innsbruck, Austria, this year. Sapporo hosted the event in 1972.

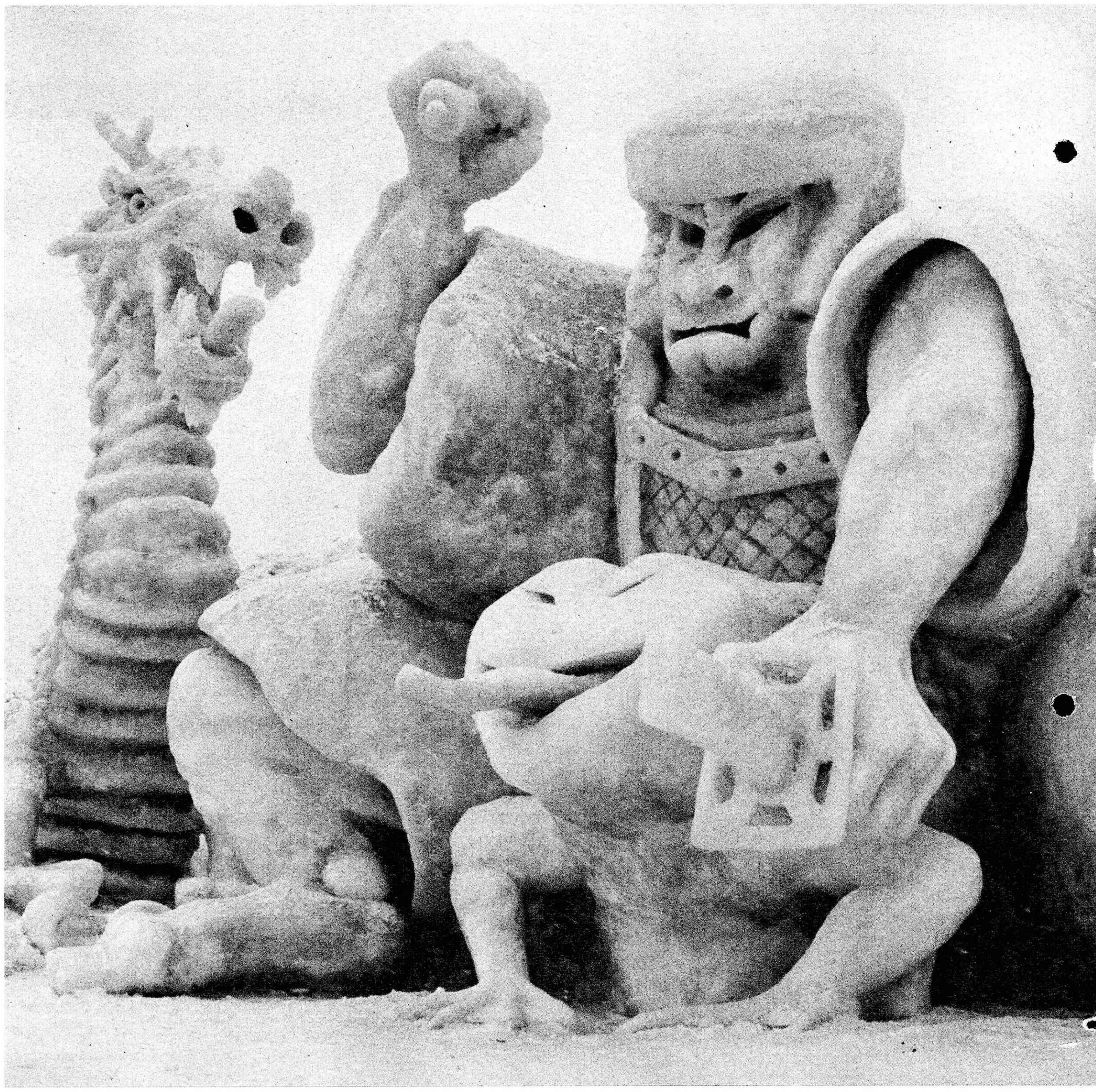
In commemoration of the U.S. Bicentennial, this year's snow festival featured an "American Square" which proved the most popular of all the 263 ice and snow sculptures displayed at both sites.

A 12-meter high replica of the U.S. Capitol and the Statue of Liberty as well as statues of George Washington and Benjamin Franklin drew huge crowds, as did a 10-meter high replica of The White House with a statue of Abraham Lincoln.

Also popular was a sculpture of Dr. William S. Clark, who had been president of Massachussetts Agricultural College in Amherst and who, in 1876, became one of the founders of the Sapporo Agricultural College. When Clark left Sapporo to return to Massachussetts, his parting words to his students were, "Boys, be ambitious," a slogan that is well remembered throughout Japan.

The models, all designed and built by the 11th Division of the Self Defense Forces, received a special citation at the opening ceremonies from William D. Miller, minister-counsellor for public affairs at the American Embassy in Tokyo.

To most foreigners, Sapporo, a city with a population of more than 1 million, is perhaps best known as the site of the 1972 Winter Olympics, when sports fans from all over the world packed the city for the international athletic event. Since then, the nearby Teine ski area, which was the main site for the slalom competitions, has become internationally famous. And many visitors to the snow festival now combine their stay in Sapporo with a few days of superb skiing. Best of all, one need not be an accomplished skier to handle Teine's slopes, since much of the area is particularly suited to beginners and intermediates.●





Top and above: Large ice and snow sculptures of favorite Kabuki scenes are popular and an annual feature of the snow festival.



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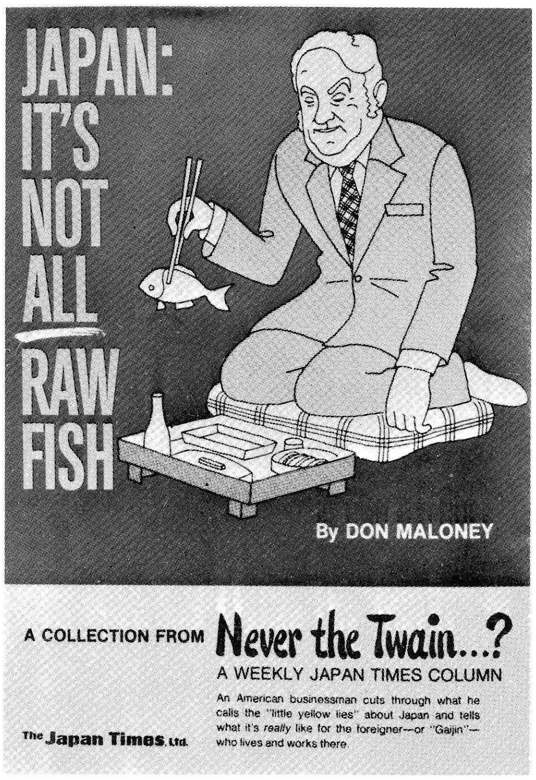
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A Temple Reborn

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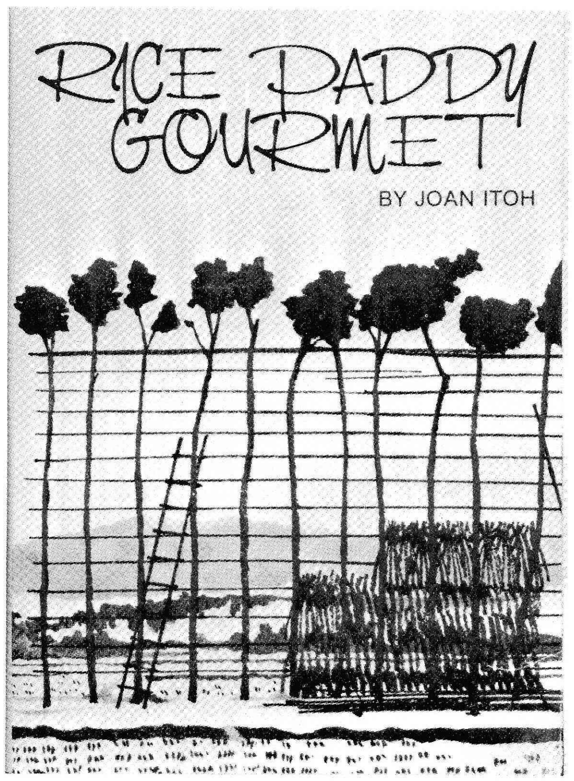


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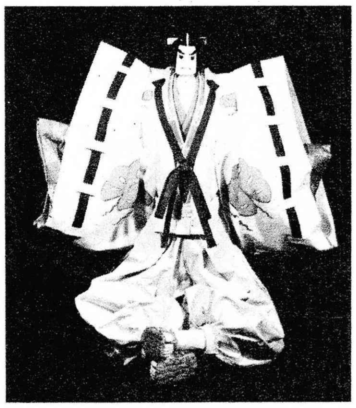
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A Temple Reborn

Story by TAMOTSU OGATA Photos by MICHIO NOGUCHI

NARA, Japan's 8th-century capital famous for its deer park, is perpetually busy taking care of its numerous cultural monuments. Earlier this year, a resplendent Buddhist temple was rebuilt on the site of its 7th-century original. A few miles away, another temple building, the largest wooden structure in the world, is having tens of thousands of its heavy roofing-tiles replaced.

Both are expensive projects, the former having cost some 1.8 billion yen ($6 million) and the latter expected to require three times as much.

The new building is the *Kondo* (Main Hall) of the Yakushiji located in the western side of Nara City. The monastery, one of the Seven Great Temples of Nara, was established in 698 A.D. in the old capital of Fujiwara under the sponsorship of Emperor Tenmu, the 40th monarch of the Imperial Dynasty. By this act, the Emperor wanted to invoke divine providence for the recovery of his ailing wife. He made the vow in 680 but it was not until 12 years after his death that the construction work was completed. The original Yakushiji was later moved to the present site from the older capital 20 kilometers to the south after the seat of government was transferred to Nara in 710. (One theory holds that the cathedral was built entirely anew at the present site in 718.)

In its original form, the Yakushiji boasted a sprawling cathedral complex consisting of the Main Hall, twin pagodas, the Lecture Hall and a dozen other subsidiary buildings.

In its long history, the monastery suffered a number of calamities — accidental fires, typhoons, earthquakes and civil war vandalism. In a battle among local feudal lords in 1528, most of the temple's buildings were destroyed, leaving only one of the twin pagodas intact. The Main Hall, which housed the temple's main icon — the Yakushi Triad —, was reconstructed in 1600, but only as a temporary shelter without the intricate, ornate interior of the prototype.

The architectural inadequacy of the building had long been felt by all concerned — most keenly by Gyoin Hashimoto, Yakushiji's venerable patriarch. But the staggering cost involved left any reconstruction plan a daydream. Wartime and postwar financial stringency made the matter worse.

Finally, the task of reconstruction fell to Koin Takada, the present chief abbot.

The undertaking got started eight years ago when Takada initiated a unique fund-raising campaign. He traveled around the country far and wide, urging the faithful to copy Hannya-shingyo, a popular 270-letter Buddhist sutra, and submit the copies to the temple along with a 1,000-yen donation for the reconstruction fund. Sutra-copying is a traditional service practiced by Buddhist followers to honor the memory of the dead or to invoke a divine blessing.

An eloquent, convincing speaker, Takada made his appeal in lecture tours, radio speeches and TV appearances. Through his untiring propaganda efforts, he succeeded in generating growing popular enthusiasm for his cause. By now, 1,110,000 sutra reproductions have been submitted by people of all ages and walks of life. These include one by a five-year-old girl and 100 written by the late Prime Minister Eisaku Sato. One devout man contributed 3,500 copies.

Reconstruction work began in 1971 following extensive research by a five-member team of architectural and historical specialists. The experts were assisted by Tsunekazu Nishioka, a fourth-generation master carpenter specializing in Buddhist temple construction.

The builders faced a formidable task because there were no old blueprints to fall back on and yet the primary requirement was to make the rebuilt structure the closest possible replica of the 7th-century prototype. Luckily, the foundation stones of the original structure had been left intact and the temple's records specified at least the height of the main pillars. As for the interior structure, the East Pagoda, the sole survivor of the original Yakushiji buildings, provided much of the necessary data for woodwork and other interior details.

To provide against the not impossible fire hazards, it was decided to build the sanctuary with reinforced concrete. The structure was to be equipped with electrically-operated steel shutters so that at least the Yakushi Triad may be salvaged in case of an emergency. The million or so sutra copies contributed by the faithful will be stored in the "attic" of this concrete structure.

For the carpenters, the biggest problem was how to procure the timber suitable for the massive building, the largest wooden structure to be constructed in more than a hundred years. It was found that indigenous trees of the required dimensions were not readily available. If there were some, it was economically unfeasible to fell and carry them out of the primordial forests of the Kiso Region. In the end, it was decided to procure them in Taiwan and, with the help of a devout local businessman, 300 cypress trees, all 2,500 years old or older, were made available in 1971.

On April 1, five years after the ground-breaking ceremonies were held, the new *Kondo* was dedicated with much pomp and ceremony. As 10,000 devotees and well-wishers watched, coverings were pulled down from the glittering finials at both ends of the ridge, revealing the full spectacle of the 22-meter-high (72 feet) edifice in all its dignified splendor.

With its white walls, vermilion beams and pillars, green lattice windows and gilt fittings, the building presents a superb chromatic composition. It is a two-story structure but looks larger because of the two extra eaves overhanging the balcony and the porch.

The *Kondo* houses the bronze image of Yakushi, the "Healing Buddha" or "King of Medicine," who rules the Eastern Paradise of the Buddhist pantheon. The majestic statue in seated posture is flanked by the solar and lunar bodhisattvas, standing to the right and left, respectively. All of the three images were gilded originally but have acquired their luminous black sheen from the fires they survived.

The bronze images impress the visitor both with their monumental size and the beauty of their swelling bodies, which is enhanced by the sensuously rendered flesh surfaces and gracefully



Yakushiji's monks march in a procession toward the new Main Hall to conduct a service.

flowing drapery. Together, the three statues are reputed as one of the greatest landmarks in the history of Japanese sculpture.

The Yakushi image in the center sits on a square bronze pedestal, around which one will find intriguing relief works of a variety of exotic, puzzling motifs. They include six pairs of grotesque creatures of savage mien, strange figures of tusked demons, a quadruplet of Chinese guardian deities in the form of a dragon, tiger, red bird and tortoise as well as bunches of grapes and lotus patterns. They make up a bewildering collection of Indian, Central Asian, Greek and Chinese designs and figures, which would seem to reflect the influx of these diverse cultures into 7th-century Japan. The three statues are placed on a large Chinese marble platform.

Despite the many disasters it suffered in its long history, the Yakushiji retains a number of precious historical and cultural monuments, which are duly designated as National Treasures. The East Pagoda is one. This three-storied structure, which rises to a height of 128 feet, is among the most beautiful architectural specimens of the kind. The four-piece finial atop the pagoda delineates groups of heavenly figures floating in an array of clouds and swirling scarves — a sculptural marvel with a strikingly modern touch.

Another attraction is the painting of Kichijoten, a goddess of prosperity and happiness. Said to be modeled after the merciful Empress Consort Komyo, it is one of the oldest painted portraits in Japan.

On the east side of the compound is the East Temple Hall, another National Treasure remodeled in the Kamakura Period (1192-1333). Standing in the position of its chief icon is the magnificent Sho Kannon, a skillfully cast bronze statue which, like the Yakushi Triad, was once gilded but has now been polished into a black sheen. The statue bears traces of the archaic smile, flatness and flaring drapery characteristic of the early Nara Period in contrast to the freer and more supple triad figures.

Another interesting object at the Yakushiji is Buddha's Footprint, a large stone bearing a depression shaped like a foot and measuring more than 18 inches in length. It is considered a rare specimen of indigenous objects of worship that prevailed in India prior to the development of Buddhist sculpture.

Now that the Main Hall has been built, there is a growing public opinion anticipating reconstruction of the Western Pagoda. The foundation stones for it have been preserved intact since the old building was destroyed in 1528 along with the original *Kondo.*

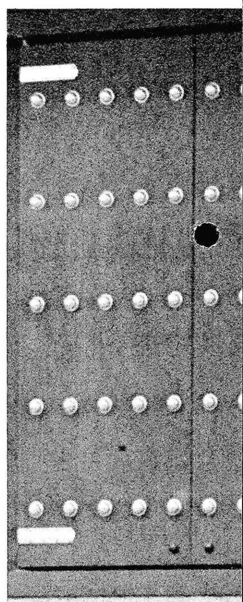
This is likely to materialize in the near future. Chief Abbot Takada said recently, "I have pondered long and hard over the matter and decided to resume my sutra-copying campaign. It may take years but with Buddha's providence and public support, I would like to have not only the West Pagoda but the entire cloister restored."







Left: Yakushiji's new Main Hall stands in solitary majesty. Above: Tsunekazu Nishioka, the master carpenter, muses over his work.


薬師如来








Far left: The Yakushi image, chief icon of the Main Hall. Above: Monks hurry to sutra-chanting service in the sanctuary. Left: Chief Abbot Koin Takada (right) officiates at a regular service before the triad of Buddhist images.

Yakushiji's Peripatetic Chief Abbot



When Koin Takada, chief abbot of the Yakushiji Temple, addressed a massed crowd of 10,000 men and women attending the dedication ceremony for the temple's Main Hall recently, he was seeing his dream of many years come true.

Reconstruction of this structure, the largest of the type to be built in a century, was already being discussed when Takada, then a fifth-grader, entered the Yakushiji as a priestling in 1935. When he became the temple's chief abbot in 1967, the same subject was the first to be brought up at a press conference. At that time, Takada recalls, he had no definite plans except some vague hopes that if it was to be undertaken at all, the fund would be raised in a manner "befitting a Buddhist monastery."

He soon hit on an idea which he thought would fit the requirements. This was to have would-be donors copy a popular sutra and contribute the reproductions to the temple together with a 1,000-yen donation for each. One million such sutra copies and the Yakushiji Temple could expect a building fund of one billion yen, which was considered sufficient for the project at that time.

There was one miscalculation in his scheme, however. He had forgotten about the cost of the paper and mailing expenses involved. "After all, we priests know nothing of the world," chuckles Takada.

The fund-raising drive was by no means an overnight success. In the first two years of the campaign, only 80,000 copies were collected.

Takada stepped up the drive by making full use of his outstanding talent — eloquence. He traveled across the country many times on speaking tours, regaling his audiences wherever he went. He also spoke over the radio and made TV appearances. A born orator, he never failed to captivate his listeners. His grade school classmates recall how Takada used to enthral the whole class with his narration of some select passages from Hugo's "Les Miserables."

Takada further boosted his campaign by writing a series of paperbacks dealing with Buddhist teachings, philosophy of life, compassion, happiness, love and other popular subjects. In a matter of several years, he has had a dozen titles published.

As Takada's fund-raising drive gained momentum, the business community came to his aid. Despite the depression caused by the oil crisis of 1973, leading industrial corporations and banks have contributed a cool 400 million yen. His incredibly wide circle of acquaintances also helped out.

Takada is a boy-faced man in his early 50's, slightly built, with a husky voice and ready smile. He jokingly describes himself as an "ex-guide." He is referring to the fact that in his younger days, he used to act as a guide for swarms of high school students visiting the Yakushiji in the course of their group tours. In this voluntary assignment, he would show the youngsters around the temple compound and explain, in his now famous fashion, the beauty and religious value of the Yakushi Triad, then housed in the vast but bleak-looking old *Kondo,* which looked more like a warehouse than a Buddhist edifice. He recalls that he carried on the self-imposed task for some 17 years of his 20's and 30's, addressing an aggregate total of perhaps six million youths. He was happy to receive some sincere responses from his young audience. And it was that experience, he says, that prompted him to initiate the sutra-copying campaign.



Takada obliges an admirer with an autograph.

Takada's energetic activities, quite unusual for the popular image of a bonze, have aroused some whispered criticism among those who think he is indulging in excessive publicity. "I'm not overly concerned about it," Takada shrugs his shoulders. "Everyone," he comments, "has his own way of thinking. In one of his sermons, Buddha said that people are prone to criticize others either for sitting silent or for talking too much. There is no one in this world who is immune from censure, he said.

"I cannot help pitying the people who think that the Yakushiji has managed to build its new *Kondo* just by clever publicity. No matter how much you want to publicize your cause, what can you do if people won't let you do so? Even if you want to use the mass media as a tool for your own publicity, they won't oblige you so easily. It's not that easy."

Face-Lifting for the Great Buddha Hall



Photos by MICHIO NOGUCHI

A workman reinforces the scaffolding around the giant gold-plated finial atop the Great Buddha Hall.

THE Great Buddha Hall of the Todaiji Temple in Nara, the city's most celebrated landmark, is now undergoing an unusual face-lifting operation.

Started in October 1974, the project calls for replacing defective tiles among the 125,000 that cover the two-layer roof of the colossal building. At the present stage, it is still unknown exactly how many of the tiles can be salvaged. Engineers in charge think that about a half will have to be renewed.

The renovation work will take six years to complete and cost 6 billion yen ($20 million). Roofing shingle that has decayed due to leaking rain over the years will also be renewed and more effective fire prevention devices installed.

The Buddha Hall is as large as an eight-story modern building. Even this scale is only two-thirds of the original structure built in 752 A.D. under the orders of Emperor Shomu, the 45th monarch. It suffered two civil war fires — in 1180 and 1567.

Rebuilt for the second time in the early 18th century, the present building underwent major repairs in the early years of this century. The reconstruction and repair works took many years, having been hampered by shortages of funds and materials in both cases.

The largest wooden building in the world, the Buddha Hall measures 57 meters (187 feet) in width and 50 meters (165 feet) in depth. It rises to a height of 47 meters (155 feet).

Its chief icon is the gigantic seated image of Vairocana, which means, in Sanskrit, the "monarch illuminating the entire universe." It stands almost 50 feet high and weighs 380 tons. To dramatize its enormous size, tourist guides cite some other figures: the Buddha's face 16 feet long, ears 8 feet high and thumbs 5 feet long.

The great bronze statue has suffered from both natural and man-made disasters and has been repaired extensively. Records say that in its original shape, the statue stood about five feet taller than at present.

The staggering dimensions of the Buddha Hall called for much ingenuity on the part of the builders in charge of the current repair work, Shimizu Construction Co. They set up the steel scaffolding in three separate sections at one side of the hall, moved each on rollers, inch by inch, over the building and joined them together after they were put into position. The entire scaffolding, covered with wire nets and canvas sheets, weighs 2,300 tons and is installed on a quadrangular foundation made with 2,000 cubic meters of concrete. It serves also as a temporary shelter for the big hall.

"We must be thankful for the efficient machines and tools we have today," says an engineer. "In the renovation work carried out some 70 years ago, an extended total of a quarter million men had to be employed. This time, we need only 5,000 for the six-year project. We use elevators, chain conveyors and overhead traveling cranes. We can't complain."

One of Nara's major tourist attractions, the Great Buddha Hall will remain open while the repairs go on. *(T.O.)*



The Buddha Hall covered with a huge shelter.



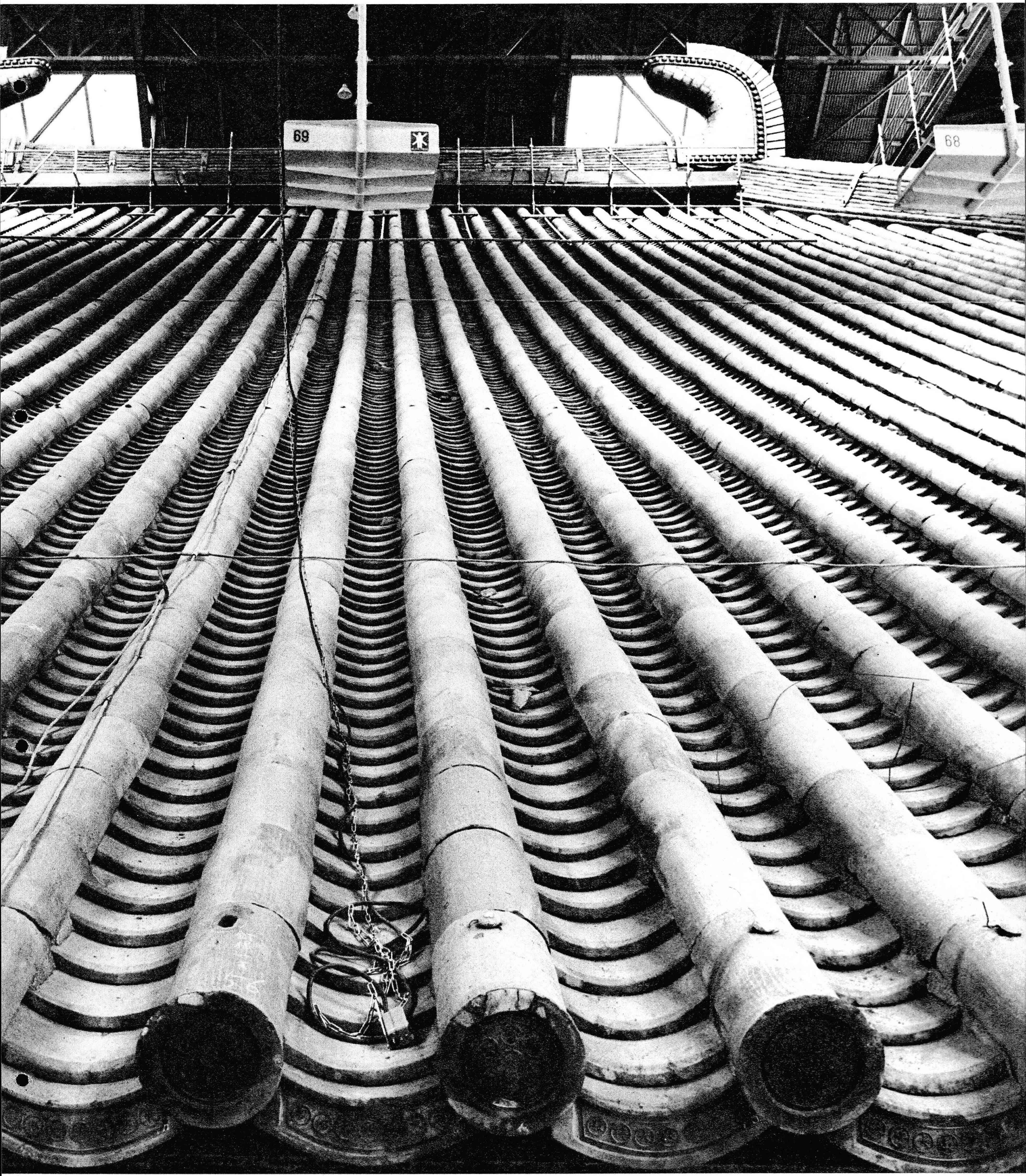
The giant building as seen from approximately the same position before the renovation work began.



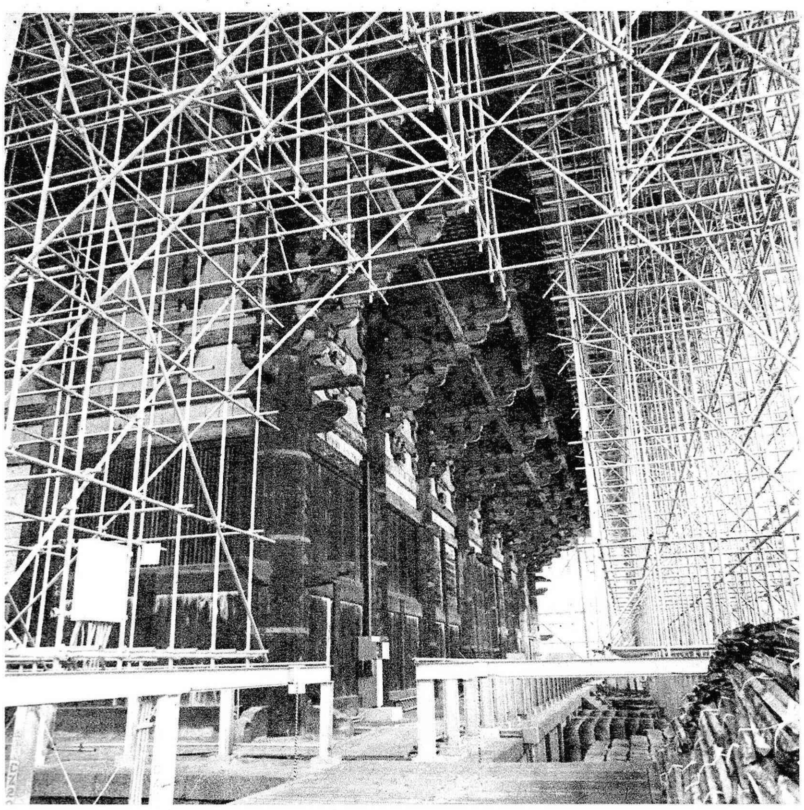
The bronze statue of Vairocana, main icon of the Buddha Hall.

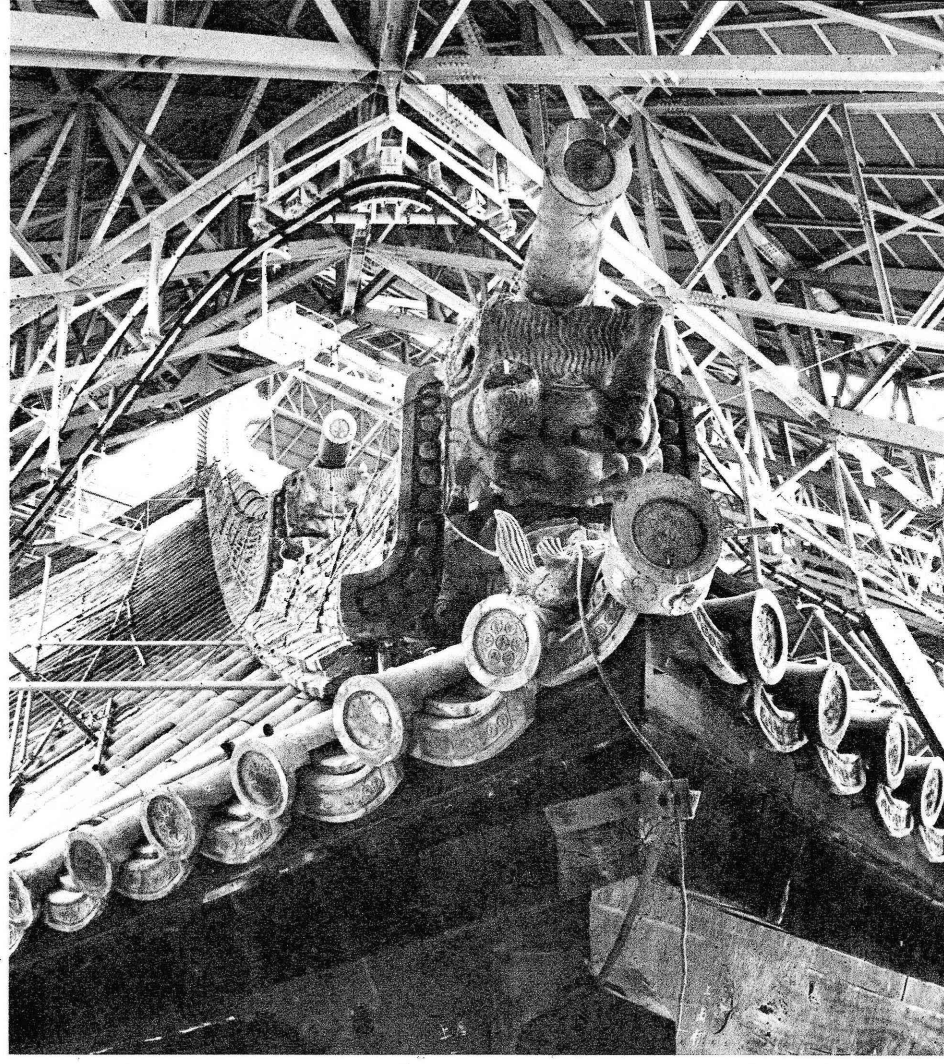


Thousands of heavy tiles ready for dismantling.



Below: Steel pipe scaffolding that supports the workmen's platforms and shelter roof. Right: Twin gargoyles on the ridge of the huge roof, meant to scare off evil spirits.







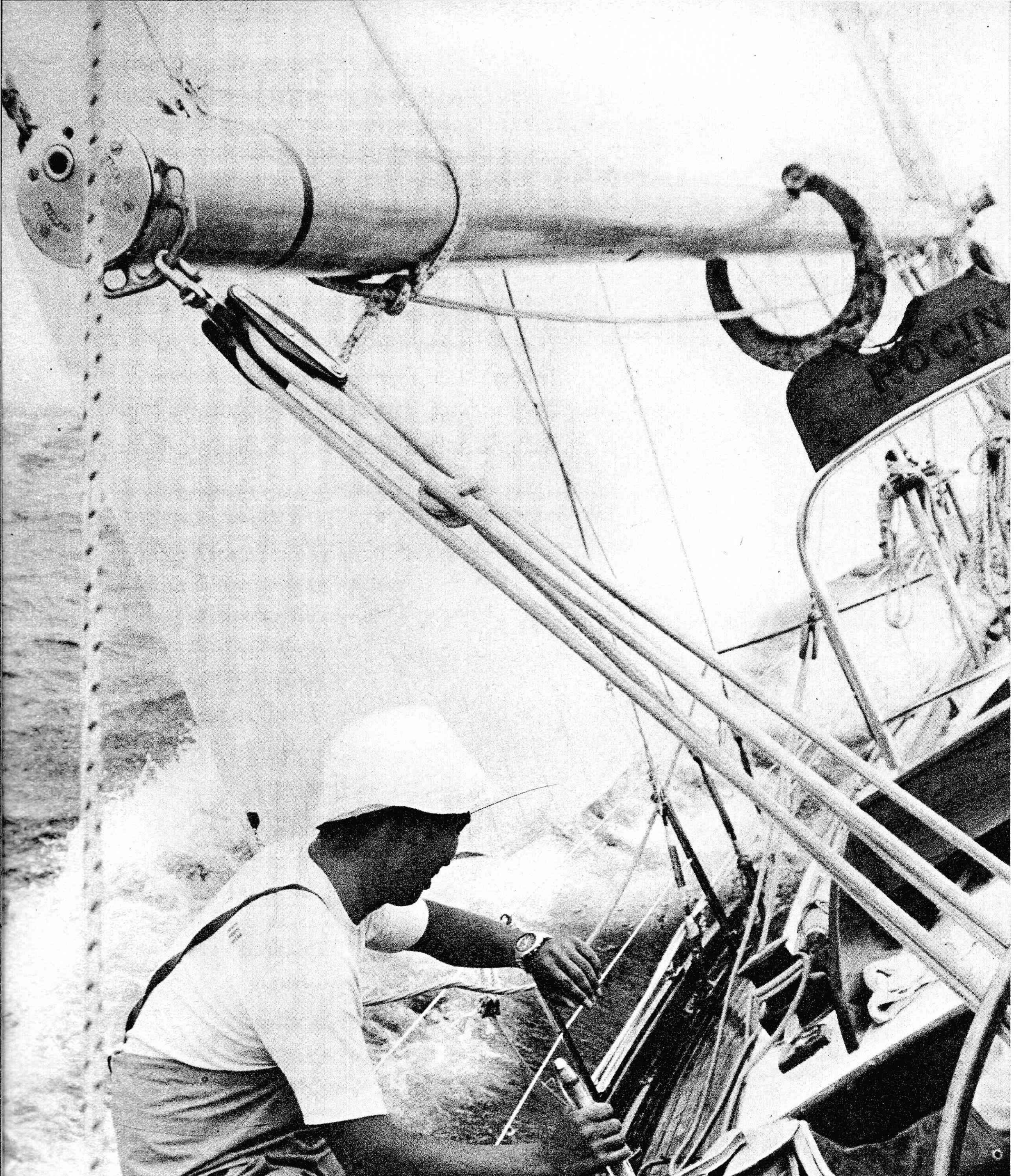
Agile workmen prepare to lay gangplanks on the sloping roof of the building.

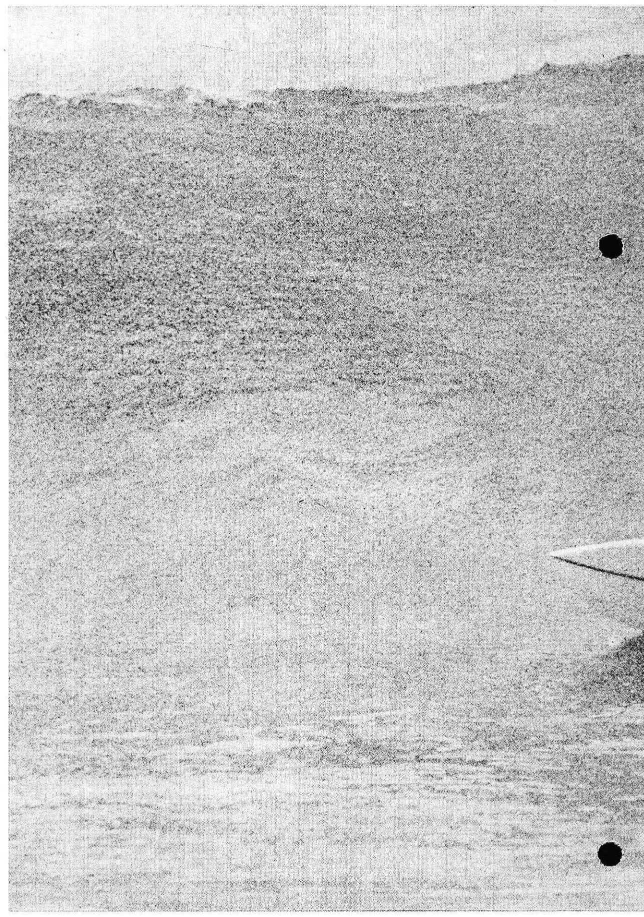
Booming Marine Sports

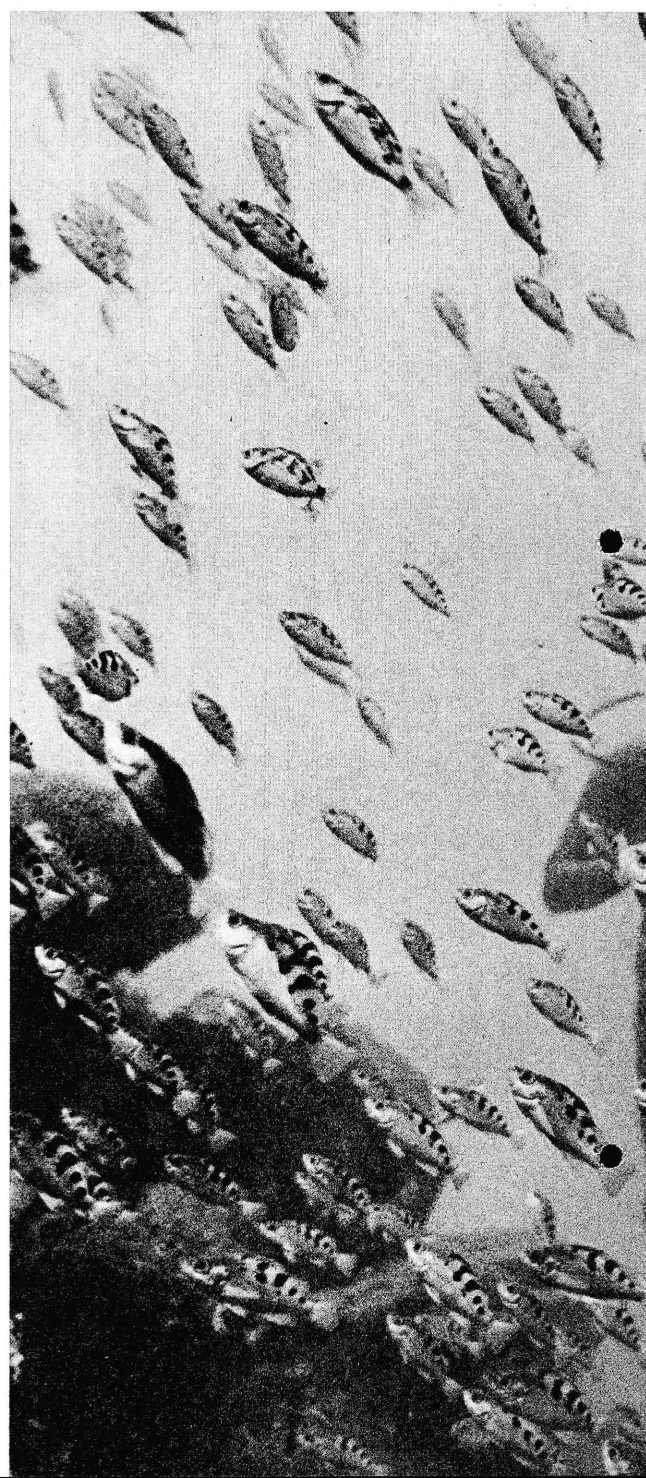
Story by Takahiko Sakurai
Photos by Takahiko Sakurai, Isamu Sato and Kimio Ito



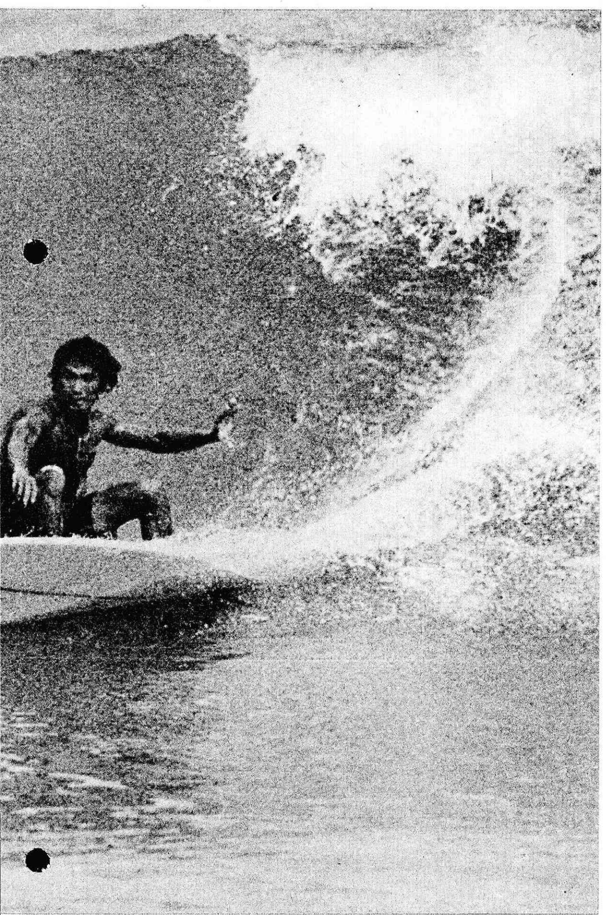
Cruisers set sail before a fair wind in the annual regatta at Sagami Bay.

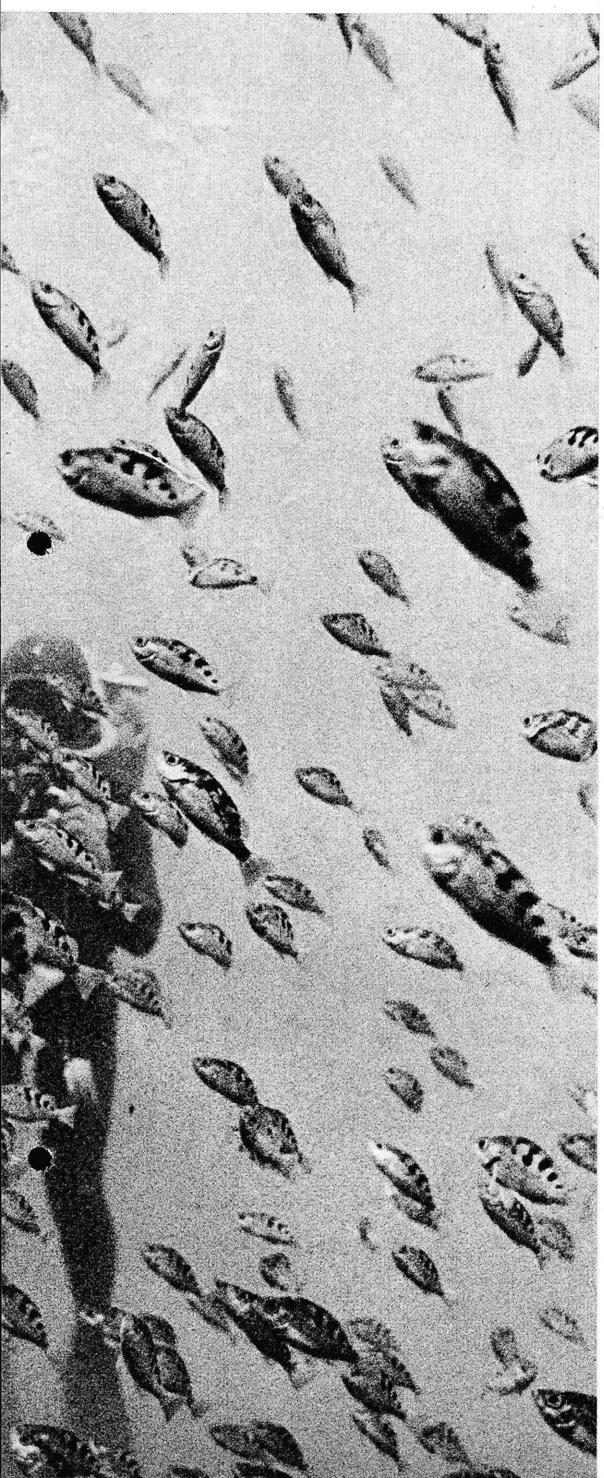






Above: Yachtsman times the speed in a race. Above right: A great wave enhances the thrill of surfing. Right: The sea bottom is a playground for a diver equipped with aqualung.





MARINE sports were introduced to Japan nearly half a century ago and have been enjoying an unprecedented boom in recent years thanks to the fact that this country is surrounded by seas with sharply delineated four seasons of the year and also because of the hot summer which drives great hordes of people to the sea and seashore to escape the heat every year.

Among the most popular forms of marine sports enjoyed by the Japanese people are yachting, boating, surfing, scuba diving, canoeing and fishing. It is estimated that there are about 30 million Japanese who enjoy these types of water sports today.

Yachting and boating have become increasingly popular among marine sports enthusiasts in recent years. Every year in April, an international boat show is held at Harumi Pier in Tokyo where domestic and foreign-made boats and yachts costing up to ¥50 million each are displayed and sold.

YACHTING — Yachting was introduced to Japan less than 50 years ago, but it is enjoying huge popularity today. An increasing number of junior and senior high schools in the country have taken up this sport as an extracurricular activity among its pupils. The Japanese National Sports Festival — a Japanese version of the International Olympic Games — which is held every year, includes yacht racing as one of its events. Young men and women from all parts of the country vie with each other in races involving the one-man Finn class, the two-man Snipe class and the 470 class.

Yachting is also quite popular among college students and office workers. Every year, a national championship competition is held for all the classes mentioned above. In order to qualify for the championships, the teams must go through elimination races which are held throughout the country. The winning teams at the national championships are selected to represent Japan in world competition and in the Olympic Games. Aside from the above-mentioned types of yachts, Japan produces approximately 50 types of dinghies and races are held for each type every year, centering on team competition.

Aside from dinghy racing, cruiser racing is enjoying considerable popularity today, particularly among office workers. A boom has been witnessed in level racing during recent years because the Nippon Ocean Racing Club has been sponsoring such races annually. The introduction of top international designs to Japan has also made it possible for Japanese boat manufacturers to produce some of the most excellent one-tonners, half-tonners and quarter-tonners.

An international quarter-tonner race is scheduled to be held in Japan in 1978. Next year, a Japanese team will participate in the Admiral Cup Race (Britain) which is one of the biggest and most famous yachting races in the world.

BOATING — One of the chief reasons for the popularity of marine sports in Japan is the fact that during the past decade, more than 400 marinas with excellent facilities have been completed in various parts of the country. Like yachting, motor boating is also enjoying great popularity today with as many as 100,000 motor boats registered. Motor boats are indispensable for fishing and diving.

Power boat racing with all its speed and thrills, is also enjoying wide popularity. The Atami Ocean Cup Race, which is held in July every year off Atami, is of international scale and many of the teams competing in the race purchase super class boats and engines from abroad to vie for first honors.

SURFING — Surfing in Japan is a comparatively young marine sport and as elsewhere in the world, this type of sea sport is quite popular among young people of Japan today. It is not unusual to see long lines of cars carrying surfboards on their roof parked on streets near the coast. The huge waves of the Pacific which roll into the beaches of Japan make the country an ideal place for surfing. It is estimated that there are approximately 100,000 surfing enthusiasts in Japan today, and during the off season, an increasing number of fans travel to such surfing paradises as Hawaii and Australia every year to keep in shape.



A variety of boats exhibited at the 1976 International Boat Show held at Harumi, Tokyo.

CANOEING — Like surfing, canoeing is a marine sport which can be enjoyed simply and comparatively inexpensively. It is a great thrill to paddle a canoe down the rapids of a swift-flowing mountain stream, balancing oneself expertly on the tiny craft to escape from being overturned. It is also a sport which enables a group of canoeists to paddle from one island to another in a touring excursion. Canoe races are also held regularly and the winners are selected to represent Japan in this event in the Olympic Games.

DIVING — Aside from the marine sports already mentioned, an increasing number of people are being attracted to the mysterious deep. They are challenging the coral reefs of Okinawa in the south and the sea under ice floes in Hokkaido in the north where the water is below freezing point in winter. With the great development and dissemination of aqualung equipment witnessed in recent years, there are more than 200 diving clubs and an estimated 100,000 divers.


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Far left: Windsurfing is fast catching on in Japan. Above: Power boat event is a most thrilling part of the Atami Ocean Cup Race. Left: A solitary canoe with a setting sun in the background.

Grottoes Around Mt. Fuji

Photos by TAKANORI OGAWA

A THREE hours' car ride from the heart of Tokyo brings you to a string of five lakes, known as Fuji-Goko (Five Lakes of Fuji), at the northern foot of Mt. Fuji, Japan's highest mountain (3,776 meters above the sea), which is renowned worldwide as a symbol of the nation. And between two of the lakes — Shojiko, second from west, and Saiko, third — is a vast sea of trees called Aoki-ga-hara in which it is dark even in the day.

Dense with giant trees aged 300 years or longer and overgrown with thick moss, the deep, forbidding forest has few trodden paths. From olden times, the local populace have shied away from the forest because once off a beaten track, no one could get out of the dark maze of tall trees that conceal the sun. At places, the compass does not work as the needle starts to turn. Moreover, the primeval forest is dotted with many large, hidden, bottomless holes just like pitfalls.

Scientifically, these holes are termed lava caves. Thus far, as many as 39 such caves have been found in the Aoki-ga-hara district. These and other lava caves discovered to date around Mt. Fuji add up to 74 — the largest number for any volcano in the world.

Here is how lava caves came into existence.

In olden times, Mt. Fuji, before taking the present shape, erupted repeatedly eruptions in a well-known geotectonic zone called fossa magna (named by German geologist Edmund Naumann in 1885). Later, a number of eruptions occurred along the tectonic line of the zone on the side of the mountain, creating the so-called parasitic cones. The newest of these cones, called Mt. Hoei, emerged from an eruption lasting from November 23 to December 9, 1707. It is among the most famous and largest of all parasitic cones surrounding Mt. Fuji.

The eruptions on the mountainside poured forth streams of lava. As such lava flow covered the ground, its surface cooled first, forming a highly viscous semisolid film. But red-hot lava still remained under the surface, containing large amounts of volatile matters. The surface cooled and hardened further, making it impossible for such volatile matters to evaporate into the air. As a result, they turned into gas mainly comprising steam. Then such gas accumulated and formed small caves here and there. Later, as lava under the surface moved, the small caves linked up with each other to form long and large caves. Finally, these caves pierced through the semisolid upper layer of lava, making many holes on the surface. And these are the so-called lava caves.

It cannot be said that lava caves form in all lava flows. That is, they are created only in a vast, thick layer of high-temperature basaltic lava. Therefore, only a very small number of such caves are found in Japan except at Mt. Fuji.

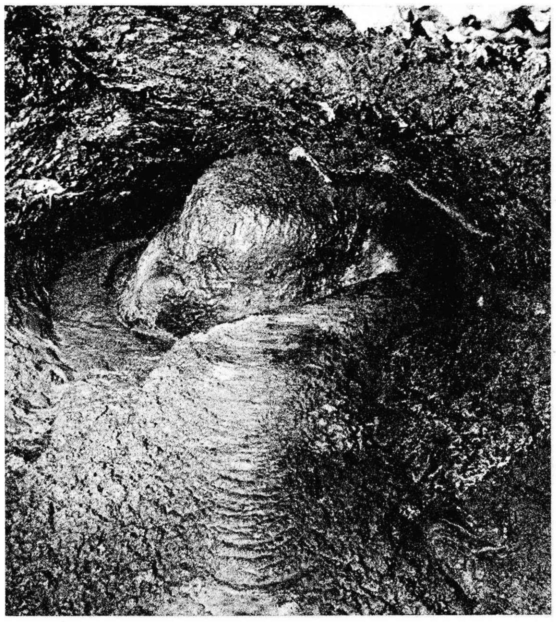
The Mt. Fuji Lava Cave Study Society and the Japan Caving Association have jointly conducted a survey on the lava caves of Mt. Fuji, and their survey report has won high applause among speleologists of the world. Discovered in the caves are lava shelves and ropy lava-floors indicative of lava stagnation on the floor, as well as siliceous sublimates and siliceous stalactites formed by the spurting of gas.

Mt. Fuji has nine major lava flows. The biggest of them was formed on the occasion of the 864 A.D. eruption, covering a vast area of 3,000 hectares. A primeval forest grew on this lava flow after it cooled, forming a sea of trees now known as Aoki-ga-hara. As this lava was basaltic and therefore, contained much iron, it became magnetized in the process of cooling. As a result, the needle of the compass varies from the right position by an average of 10 degrees, and at some places, the compass cannot be used at all.

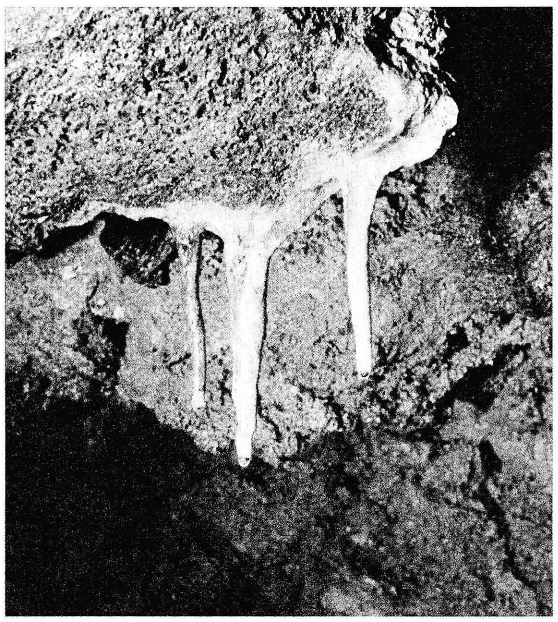
The forest contains 16 varieties of needle-leaf trees and 31 varieties of deciduous trees centering on hemlock-spruce and Japanese cypress. Besides these tall trees, there are 25 varieties of low trees, such as Japanese andromeda and deutzia, and 36 varieties of grasses and plants plus much moss, and many winders and epiphytes.

Nowadays, hiking courses have been built through the vast wooded area, but the dense forest is still not easy of approach for the general public. It is thus one of not many charming places still concealed in the depths of Japan's Mother Nature.

(M.I.)



A rare example showing that lava flowed into the cave from a different direction.



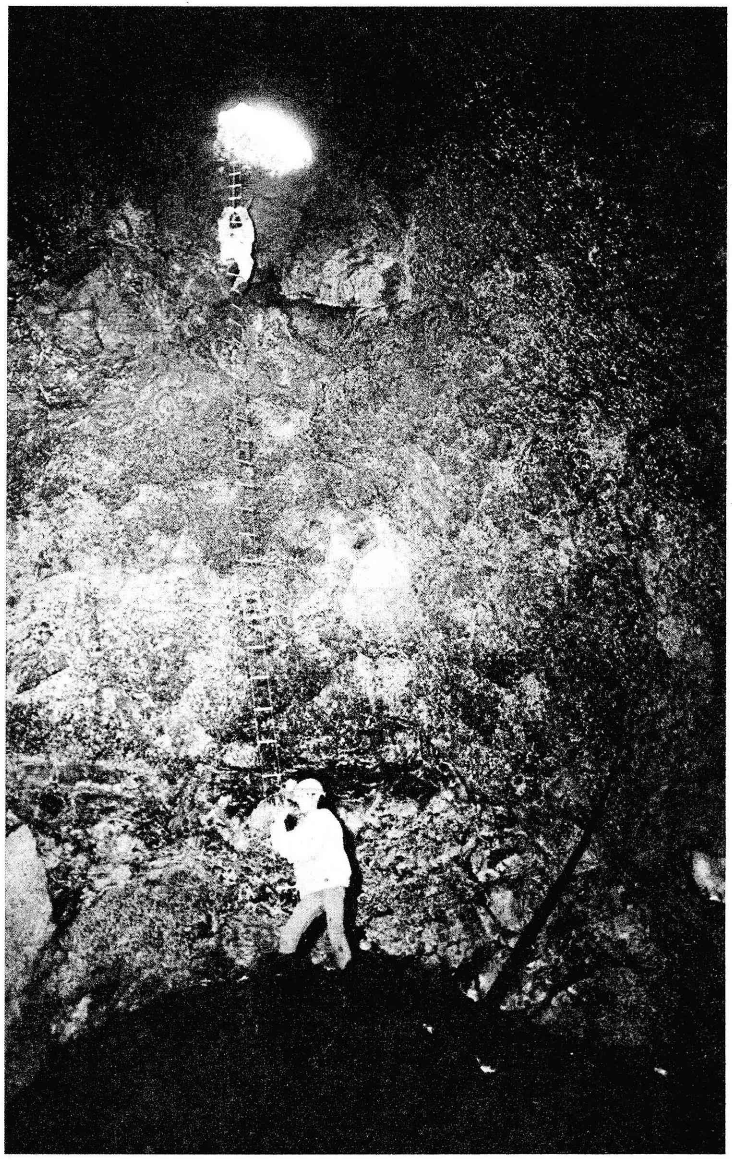
These siliceous stalactites, measuring 7 to 10 cm, are very rare specimens.

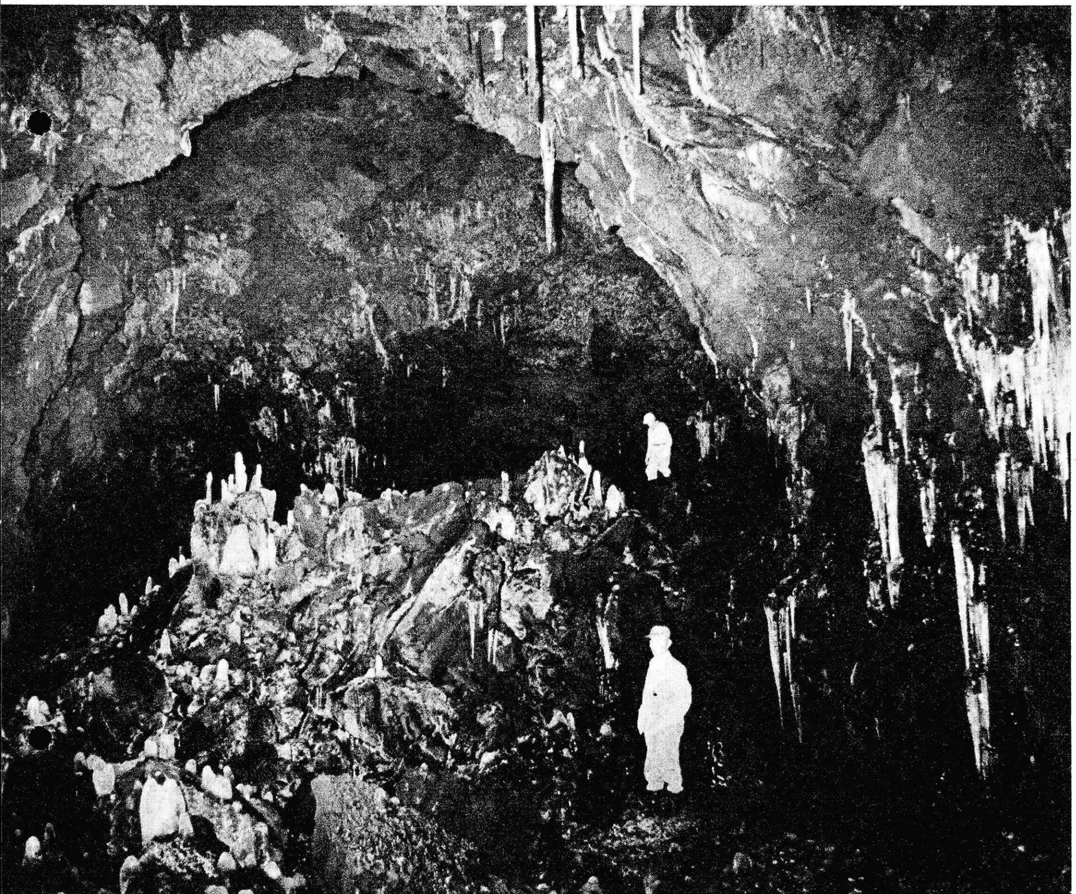


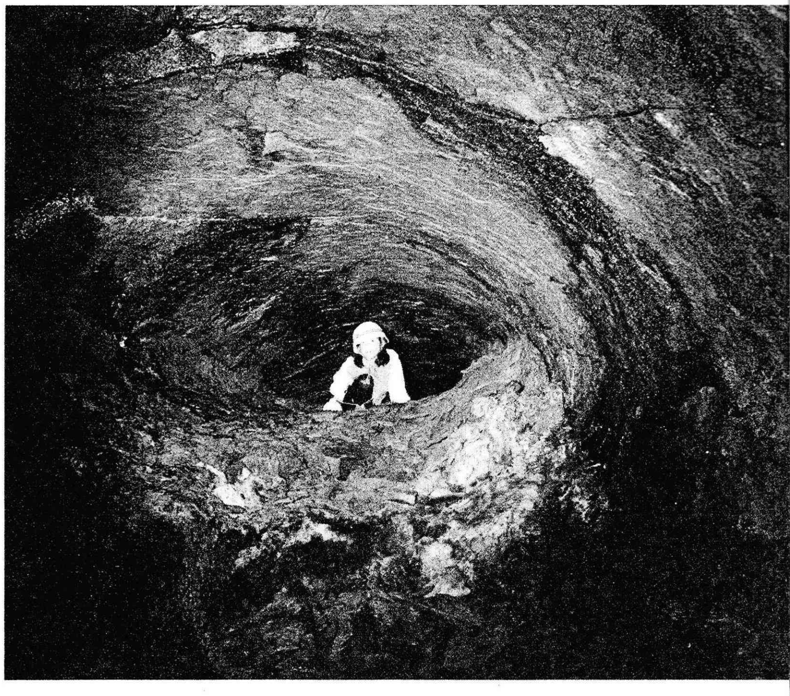
A stagnant lava flow has left a ropy pattern on the floor of a cave.



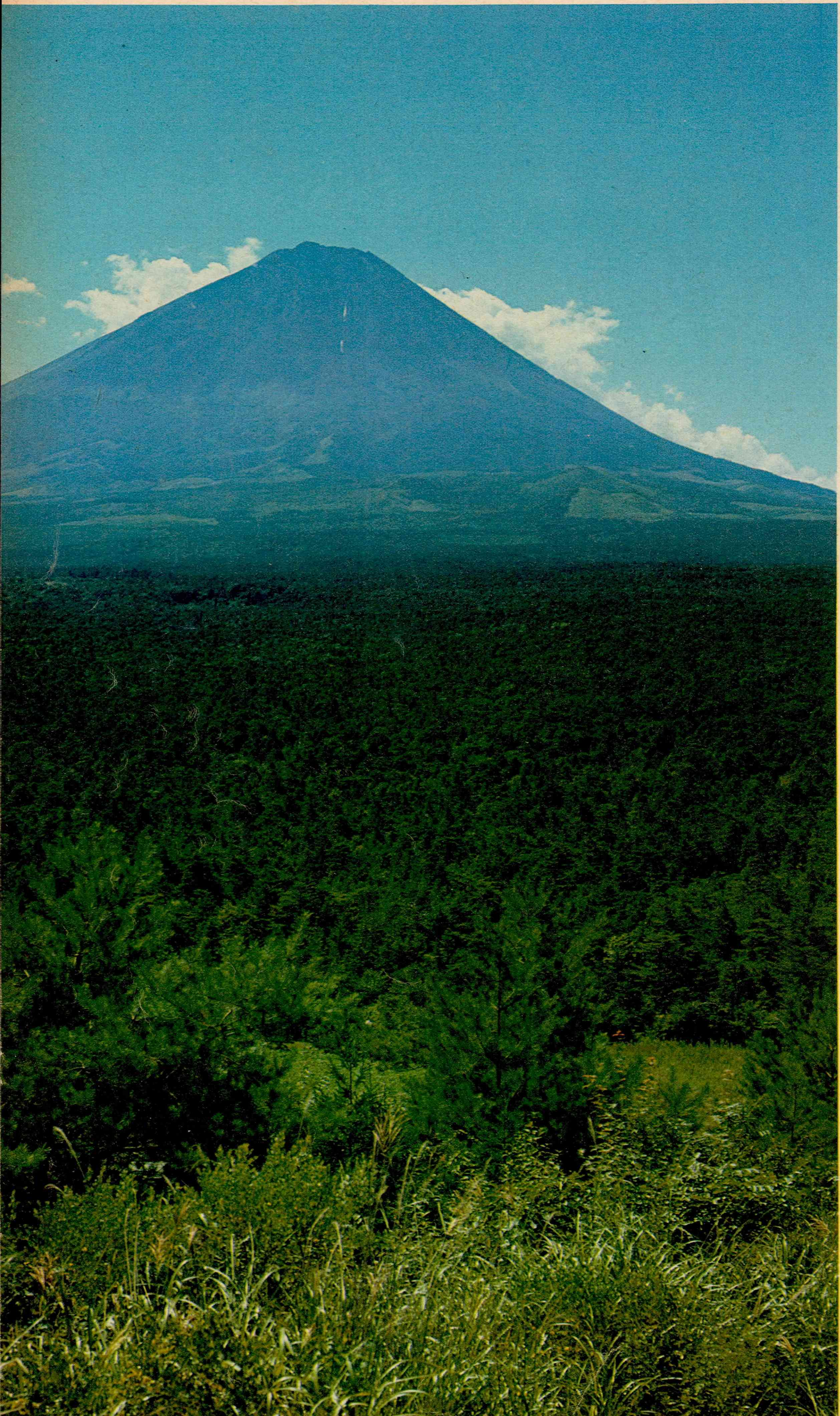
Left: An explorer descends into a lava cave in the primeval forest of Aoki-ga-hara. Below: Interior of the same cave.







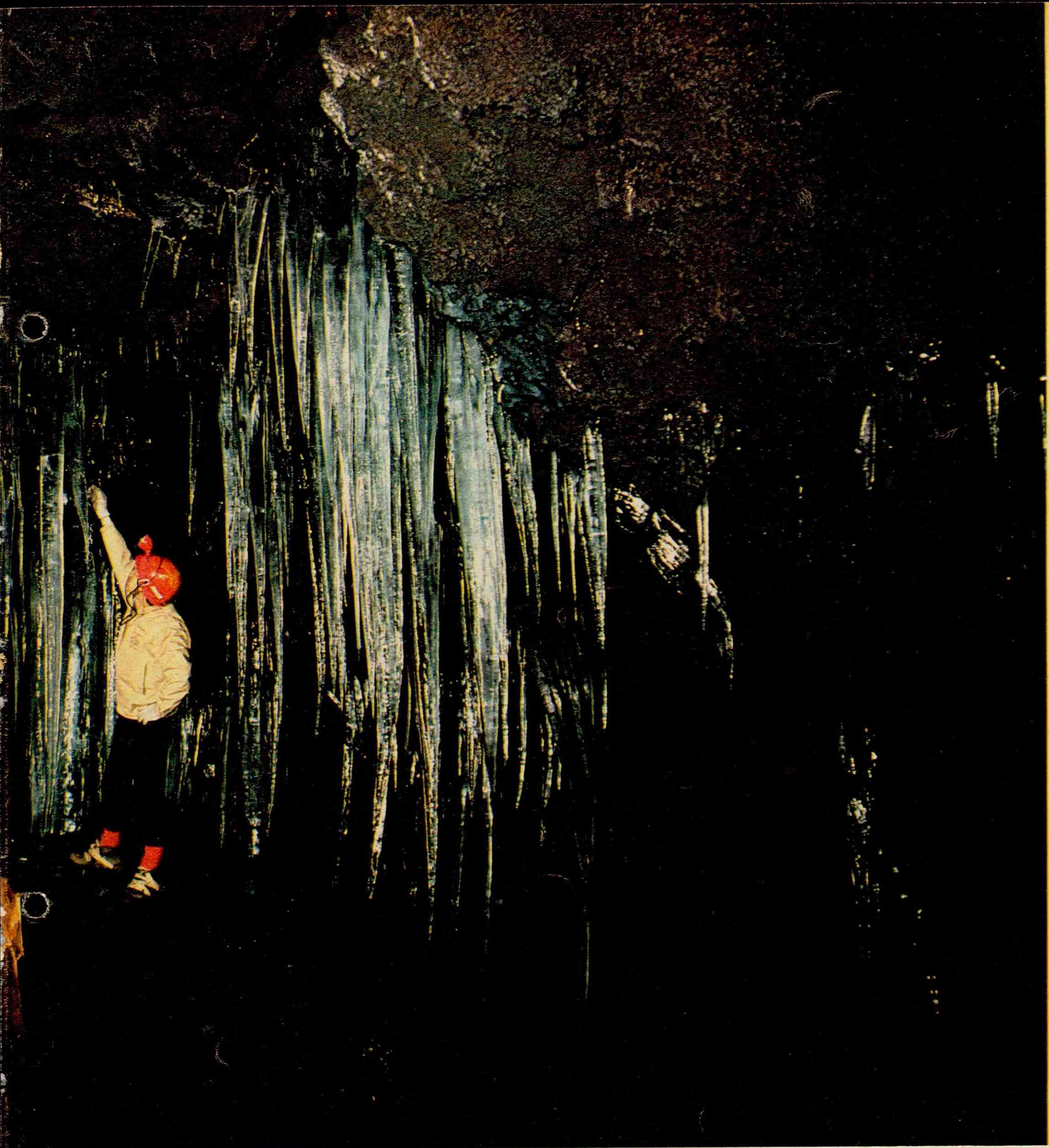
Above: A typical lava shelf in a cave. Right: Icicles are found in some caves.







Above: The Aoki-ga-hara plateau formed by lava flow is now covered with thick forests. In the background is Mt. Fuji.



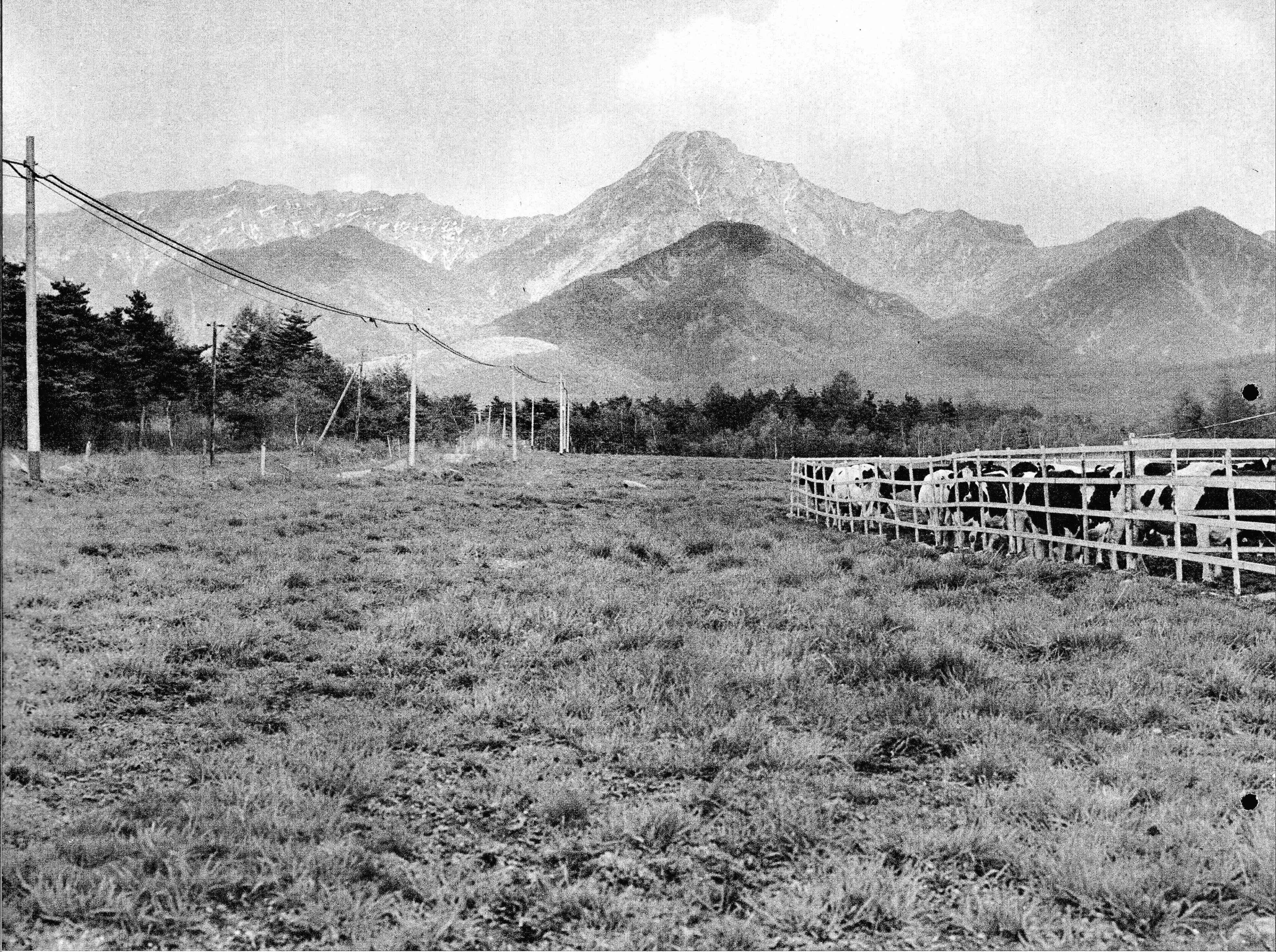




Above: The side-wall in a lava cave shows how compressed gas blew out. Above left and left: In this cave, coldest among the lava caves around Mt. Fuji, icicles and ice sheets can be seen even in mid-summer.

A Highland Weekend

Story by SUSAN GORDON Photos by JAPAN ILLUSTRATED



FROM where we sat, atop a high mound of earth, we had a commanding view of the valley below and the four mountain ranges that surrounded us. Behind us, to the east, the bold profile of the Yatsugatake (eight summits) Mountains loomed across the horizon. Before us, in the distance, stood the three lofty ridges of the Japan Alps, their still-snow-capped peaks accenting the gradually deepening colors of the approaching sunset.

The evening was peaceful. The gentleness of the breeze carried with it the soft chirping of birds from the woods below. I could hardly believe that Tokyo was less than three hours away from this wonderland of nature. Or better yet, that this paradise could be found so close to the hectic congestion of the world's largest city.

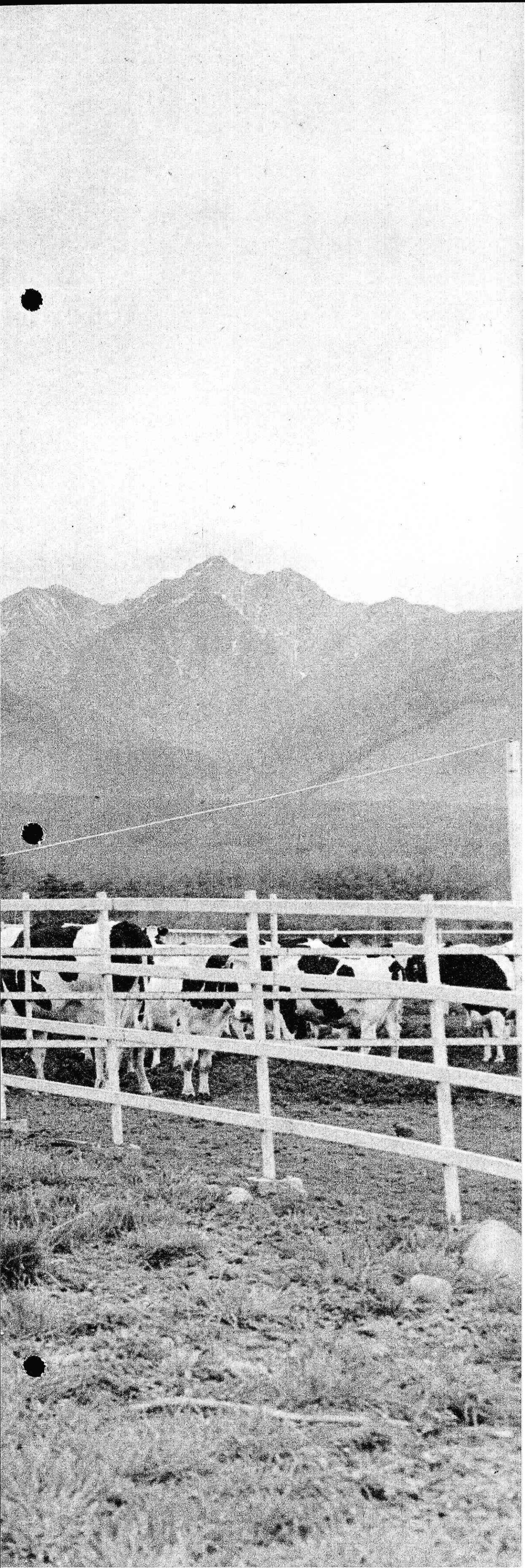
Early that same morning, we boarded the westbound limited express out of Shinjuku, arriving in Chino long before noon. From Chino, the gateway to the Tateshina Plateau, it was a 20-minute bus ride to the villa where the *pensions* were located. Actually, the bus stop was still a 5-minute drive from the villa. We telephoned the owner of our *pension* who came to get us in his car. Such a gesture at first seemed more routine than unique. But we were soon to discover this genuine kindness to be characteristic of all those living in the region.

Named for their European counterparts, the *pensions* hold much the same woodsy charm as their prototypes. They are in harmony with the tall trees that surround them and a peaceful serenity dominates the area.

Within our *pension,* there was a coziness to match the setting. The family that ran the place generated a personal warmth that is often lost in the hustle of the larger resort areas. I felt truly at home from the start, as if I had long been acquainted with the young couple who lived there. We found this openhearted quality in all the people we met in the Alps. It was most refreshing.

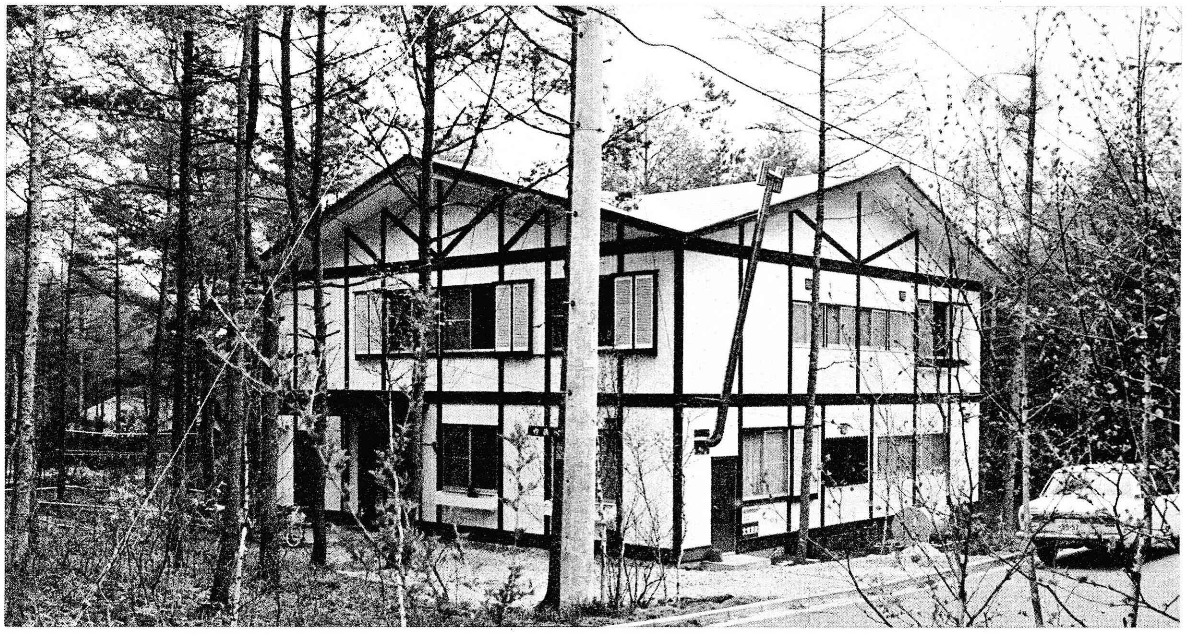
That afternoon, the *pension* owner gave us a brief orientation to the area by car. As it was my first introduction to the Alps, I didn't really know what to expect. More than impressed, I looked on silently in awe. The view was breath-taking! And although it was a hurried tour so we could get everything in before dusk, I returned to the pension more relaxed than when we had set out.

The Alps seemed to have the power to lift from my shoulders all the exhaustion, all the strain, all the problems that tend to burden one living in a large city. Surely it is this atmosphere that nurtures such genuine warmth in the people.



Left: The rich graying bands at the foot of the Yatsugatake Mountains.
Below: An unpaved road led us through a serene grove of birch trees.
Bottom: The pension — Japanese hospitality with a touch of Europe.





The next morning, we began the day with a delicious breakfast of ranch eggs and fresh milk. It was a real treat for me and alone would have provided enough of an incentive to return to the Alps, if the scenery hadn't possessed that power over me.

After breakfast, we took a long walk among the slim white birch trees. Their bare branches, not yet blessed with the foliage of warm weather, emphasized their tall stature. We gradually made our way to a nearby farm, from which our morning meal had most likely come. The peacefulness that prevailed over the scene was as relaxing to the spirit as was the fresh air. The air tasted sweet in its purity. With each breath I took, I felt refreshed and rejuvenated.

In the afternoon, we took the ropeway to the top of one of the Yatsugatake Mountains. There, walking amidst the greenery that flourishes at such altitudes, we found a beauty that stood in contrast to that of the highlands. There were more shrubs, clinging closer to the ground, with a richness in color that seemed to grow deeper as it moved up the mountain.

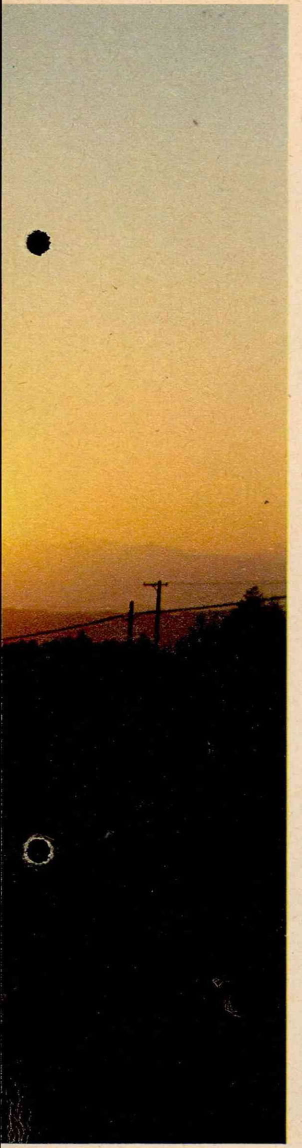
As dusk approached, we decided to return to the farm to watch the sunset. The cattle had all been boarded for the night and a contented stillness filled the air. The farm and the two silos stood silhouetted against the clear blue sky. Darkness gradually settled on the land as the sun made its exit quietly, without banners. It was magnificent, in its simplicity. Indeed, there seemed to be no end to the masterpeice that nature was displaying before us.

Time slipped by unnoticed and, before we knew it, the weekend came to an end. With regret, we headed towards Chino, where the train would take us back to Tokyo. On either side of the road stretched rice paddies, their varying levels creating a natural patchwork. And around each seeded plot stood a cluster of trees, their reflection cast upon the water collected there. In the distance, endless groves of evergreens stretched to the foothills and spanned the distance that now separated us.

As the train made its way down the mountain, I found myself staring out into space. I was numbed by the gradually changing colors of the countryside, which brought to reality the fact I was returning to the city. In the months ahead, I am sure I shall often recall the gracious mountains, noble and proud. They are calling me back, even now. Perhaps next time I shall reach the summit.











Far above: "The farm and the two silos stood silhouetted against the evening sky." Left: A buckwheat field, ready for planting. "Soba," Japanese buckwheat noodles, are a speciality of the area. Above: From atop the ropeway, we had yet another view of the Yatsugatake Mountains.



Sanae Kifuji: Queen of Dolls

Story by PATRICIA MASSY   Photos by JAPAN ILLUSTRATED



Working in her studio-showroom, Sanae Kifuji tidies a crepe paper hairstyle with a pair of tweezers. On the right is her newest invention — a moveable paper doll.

"I REALLY have a lot," said Sanae Kifuji as she opened a closet packed full of dolls. "They are just here, there, and everywhere." Her words were only too true. Tiny figurines of dancing girls pranced across the table while one meter high Kabuki actors glared from the other side of the room. All available space belonged to the dolls, even up to the ceiling where *Yaoya O-shichi,* her long hair in swirling dishevelment, was re-enacting her crazy climb up the fire tower. Among them all, Sanae, graceful and perfectly composed, seemed to be only a slightly larger version, as though their constant companionship had erased the distinction between creator and created.

The dolls she makes in such profusion are not of clay nor cloth or wood, but of paper. Now, Japanese paper is quite different from its Western counterpart. Handmade from the fiber of one kind of mulberry in a process somewhat similar to tappa, it has many of the qualities of cloth. If wrinkled into crepe or crumpled and kneaded, it becomes just as soft and pliable. Besides, it takes colors more readily and can even be batiked or tie-dyed. Already for centuries Japanese paper has been pasted into hats and purses or sewn into jackets and cushion covers.

Taking full advantage of the versatility of paper, Sanae chooses a slightly rumpled type for the kimono to give shape and texture with the appearance of fabric. The hair is fashioned of soft crepe, and the face of gossamer tissue. The paper is ordered from all over Japan for each district boasts distinctive differences, due in part to tradition, in part to geological conditions. For example, the beautifully stencilled designs that are miniature reproductions of patterns used for textiles come specially from Kyoto. Heavy paper may be from Tottori on the Japan Sea coast or Miyagi in the north.

Although the history of paper dolls goes as far back as perhaps the 9th or 10th century, Sanae has been a radical influence. In the space of 20 years she has completely changed the concept of what a paper doll should be, elevating it to the artistic level of modeled or molded figurines. When she was a little girl, paper dolls were still more or less the same faceless, armless figures children had been playing with for centuries. These *Ane-sama,* or elder sister, dolls were merely a sheet of paper folded left over right like a kimono and held with a strip tied in the shape of an obi. The tiny head had no other function than to support the voluminous traditional hair style. The beauty of the arrangement being in the obi bow and the precisely arranged hair, the doll was meant in general to be viewed not from the front, but the back.

Having learned to make *Ane-sama* dolls from her grandmother, Sanae was already an expert as a child. "But I couldn't help feeling the doll looked pitiful without a face and arms. And they were so awfully flat," she recalls. So she embarked on her adventure of innovation.

The body she formed around a core of cardboard and cotton; the kimono she made like a real one with a lining, filled with a thin layer of cotton wadding at the hems to give volume. The face she painted in like those of other Japanese dolls over a foundation of powdered oyster shell. And whenever she could not find a paper design she wanted, she applied one of her own imagination in mineral paints.



All thumbs beginners soon become teachers themselves under Sanae's guidance. Classes are held everyday here at the Ginza center, with eager students coming from all over Japan.

Her creations proved so popular that she soon found herself with a growing number of fans and followers, until finally the Kifuji School of Paper Dolls became the established organization it is today with workshops in several cities and a multitude of eager students. Although Sanae does not particularly like to travel — "I get an idea and then am absolutely beside myself unless I can get back to my studio right away to work it out" — she goes once a year to the University of Hawaii to supervise a doll making course there.

Students are first taught to get the feel of Japanese paper. Later they learn to work neatly: no messy spots of glue, no unnecessary handling. Most important, though, is finally instilling the doll with life. "If I make a *maiko* dancer, I feel just like one," she tells her students. "At night when I look at my dolls, they start to move. It's terrifying, but that's how much you have to put spirit into your work."

Most of Sanae's ideas come from Japanese theater: Kabuki, Noh, Bunraku. The similarity not only in facial expression, but also in the draping of the kimono is immediately noticed. As costumes and make-up are dictated by tradition, a great deal of research goes into each new creation. Sanae often sketches at the theater from backstage, and sometimes she uses a model. But she never makes a preliminary sample. "It would be cruel to start a doll and not finish it to perfection," she retorts.

After having drawn a detailed design and prepared all the paper, which may altogether take half a year, she starts to work non-stop without regard for food or sleep. Before each move, though, she thinks carefully of the desired effect. Then like a calligrapher's stroke of ink, the ensuing cut or fold is final. The paper is slightly moistened beforehand to make it more manageable. Then to shape it, Sanae uses the warmth of her hands, pressing a sleeve or hem between her palms for as long as half an hour. The remarkable result is that there actually seems to be a little arm or foot under the kimono where there is only empty space. Some of the male figure do have legs, however, the larger ones with feet of molded paper pulp.

Formerly paper dolls were seldom more than 15 or 20 centimeters in height, but Sanae, always eager to explore new possibilities, enjoys constructing one meter high figures. Only students well-experienced in the art of doll making can cope with this size because a dozen or more full-sized sheets of paper are required. Anything larger would be in her opinion "too grotesque." Another innovation is the *daki-ningyo,* or doll to be held, as the others are for display only. It is not attached to a stand, and the skirt of the kimono is free to be folded into a sitting position. Sanae's latest invention, exhibited recently at the prestigious Ginza store Wako, is a moveable doll that is activated by a programmed motor. Depicting the Kabuki dance *Sanbaso,* it jingles a sistrum and stamps its feet.

Sanae never repeats a design, nor is inclined to sell her masterpieces. So they continue to pile up as her inexhaustible imagination goes on creating ever more interesting and beautiful dolls. What will she dream of next? She cannot tell. But we will find out in a very short while.



"Give your doll life and an elegant spirit," Sanae tells a student. "But don't fall into exact reproduction."









Fascination with colorful costumes and Kabuki themes characterize Sanae's work. Above left: Courtesan, samurai lady, young girl, and geisha are accurately reproduced. Above right: Palace lady-in-waiting. Left: O-some Hisamatsu, the Japanese Romeo and Julliet. Above: A soft, cuddly baby doll shows off her kimono of tie-dyed paper.

Asian Musicians Meet in Tokyo

Story by FUMIO KOIZUMI
Professor of Ethnomusicology at Tokyo National University of Fine Arts & Music

The first ever joint concert of folk musicians in Japan and Southeast Asian nations recently took place at the National Theatre in Tokyo. It was held as part of "A Week of Asian Traditional Performing Arts" jointly sponsored by the Japan Foundation and the National Theatre with five nations taking part — Japan, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and Malaysia. The unique event consisted of seminars from March 29 through April 6, and musical performances on April 3 and 4. Following are reports on the musical concert.



Photos by MICHIO NOGUCHI

A Malaysian duo plays the Sape, a lute made of hollowed chunk of wood.

Right: An Okinawan band performs selections from native classics.



THE prime aim was to watch and listen to the performances of Asia's traditional musical arts at first hand in comparison with and in relation to Japan's traditional music and thereby to reexamine the community of expression and historical backgrounds among the Asian people.

In the past, the Japanese people have tended to look only toward the West in their musical interest. Even those interested in Asia's traditional music were apt to explore the traditional characteristics only in comparison with the Occidental music. This led them to commit errors, such as the assessment of Asian music with the musical yardstick of the Occident and the neglect of pan-Asian universality in Japan's musical expressions. A better knowledge of the Asian tradition, I believe, will cause the Japanese not merely to entertain a deep sense of respect and solidarity toward the cultures of the neighboring nations, but also to reflect on themselves anew as part of the Asian people.

In order to attain the said aim, the latest event in Tokyo had an entirely new composition and content. First, prior to the musical performances at the National Theatre, musicians and musicologists from Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines as well as Japan held a study seminar for a joint discussion on the wide-ranging aspects of Asia's traditional performing arts — their contents, techniques, musical instruments, historical backgrounds, and so forth.

None of the Asian performing arts, featured this time, had ever been introduced well or given close attention in Japan. But all of them are typically representative of their respective national characteristics. For instance, classical dances of Thailand have so far been extensively introduced in Japan and the world. But their accompanying music has tended to be ignored. Moreover, the Thai music so far introduced abroad represented for the most part relatively large-scale group performances of such styles as Pi-phat and Mahori. Therefore, the peculiarity of the temperament and musical scale of Thailand has not been purely experienced as music. The recent Tokyo performance, however, laid emphasis upon solos of such musical instruments as Saw-Sam-Sai (three-stringed fiddle), Jakhe (a sort of zither) and Klui (vertical flute). This enabled most of the audience to experience the unique, strange sonority of the Thai music for the first time. Meanwhile, Thai musicians for their part were deeply impressed with the solo performance of Japan's Kokyu (fiddle).

As for Indonesia, the Kecak dance of Bali Island and the Gamelan music of Central Java are well known in Japan. But what really strikes a responsive chord in the hearts of the Japanese is Kacapi-Suling group performances and songs of the Sundanese district in West Java, which were featured at the recent Tokyo concert. For the traditional forms of the Sundanese music are very similar to Japan's Sankyoku ensemble and Koto music in musical scale, musical expression and contents. This great similarity plus the extreme delicacy of the Sundanese music left a profound impression in the minds of not only the audience, but also the production staff of the concert and Japanese Koto players who also participated.

Malaysia, meanwhile, has an abundance of traditional performing arts similar to those of neighboring Indonesia and Thailand. Invited this time, however, were two young men from the jungled inland of Sarawak in Northern Borneo. They are players of Sape (plucked lute), which looks like Japan's Biwa. Two Sape are made at the same time as companion instruments by cutting up a big tree trunk in half lengthwise. The subtle sound of Sape's strings in the quiet, noise-free National Theatre had an unexpectedly pure harmony to our great surprise. How have these youths from the Kenyahs living far away from the tide of urban culture developed and fostered such a high degree of musicality?

As is well known, the people of the Philippines are most extensively influenced by the Occidental music in Asia except for Japan. However, Filipino musicians specifically invited to the Tokyo concert were youths from the Kalinga tribe living in a mountainous area of Luzon Island. For these men, it must have been quite a trying experience to travel all the way to Tokyo, which is totally different from their native village in climate and food. But their performance — even a simple striking of flat gongs and the blowing of six bamboo flutes of different lengths — presented an elaborate vignette of marvelous rythms, testifying to their delicate musicality.

The concert program was so made up as to contrast each of the performances by these foreign participants with the appropriate solo and group presentations of the traditional performing arts of the Japanese people from the Ainus to the north to the Okinawans to the south as well as their classical music. As one of the supervisors and commentators for the concert, I faced a difficult job of having the audience properly appreciate Southeast Asia's performing arts, which essentially are not intended for theatrical performance. (The other supervisors and commentators were Yoshihiko Tokumaru and Osamu Yamaguchi.) But the stage directors of the National Theatre were very cooperative in this respect.

For many Japanese, it was probably the first time that they had come into such close contact with the musical traditions of their Asian neighbors. The discovery of their strong connections with the Japanese music, the great similarities between them and the musical beauty peculiar to Japan on the occasion of the joint concert made me feel all the more keenly the necessity of cherishing the musical tradition of our own. And I am happy to note I am not alone in feeling that way.



Right: A Thai songstress sings old folk songs to the accompaniment of jakeh (zither) and other native instruments. Far right: An indonesian quartet performs traditional ballads. The flute is called suling and the zither, kecapi.


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UNU a university with a difference

Story by Dr. KINHIDE MUSHAKOJI Vice Rector for Programme, UNU

Photos by JAPAN ILLUSTRATED

THE United Nations University is a unique entity different from any of the academic institutions known as universities.

The word "university" naturally conjures up a classic image of a campus with ivy-mantled brick buildings accommodating thousands of students. In fact, when the idea of a U.N.-sponsored university was first proposed in 1969 by the then U.N. Secretary General, U Thant, this was exactly what he had in mind.



A section of the UNU Centre

In the intervening years, however, the prototype envisaged then has undergone radical changes and the UNU is now taking shape in a very different form. The character of this institution is spelled out in the UNU Charter which was approved by the U.N. General Assembly in 1974. An important ingredient of this charter is the recognition of a need "to alleviate the intellectual isolation of persons in academic and scientific communities in the developing countries" and to set up a global "network of research and post-graduate training centres and programmes."

The basic idea is, instead of assembling these scholars in one place, to have them continue their work at their present posts but help elevate the quality of their work by linking them with others pursuing related research efforts.

Another objective cited in the UNU Charter is to promote "research into pressing global problems of human survival, development and welfare." This means helping facilitate joint studies on some special subjects chosen by the University. Unlike ordinary universities with different departments specializing in their respective disciplines, the UNU is an interacademic institution mobilizing all scholastic disciplines to contribute to the solution of crucial problems confronting mankind.

A third point in the UNU Charter is "to disseminate the knowledge gained in its activities to the United Nations and its agencies, to scholars and to the people." Stress is placed on the benefit which the researches promoted by the UNU will give to humanity as a whole. The UNU cannot remain a proverbial ivory tower; it is obligated to make the results of its activities available to the U.N. and the peoples and researchers of all nations of the world.

The UNU is still in its infancy. It conducted its first operations last fall when three five-day working meetings of leading international experts were held at its headquarters in Tokyo. The series of conferences, each attended by about 25 persons from various parts of the world, were held to obtain guidance on strategies and projects to be undertaken by the UNU.

The University Centre is quartered in the Toho Life Insurance Building at Shibuya, Tokyo. Currently, it operates with a staff of about 40 persons.

The university is headed by Dr. James M. Hester, former president of New York University. He is assisted by five vice rectors. The University Council with a global representation serves as the governing body of the UNU.

The UNU is still in the stage of exploring specific subjects to tackle but a broad perspective may be gained from a few orientations evolved so far. As for its "network" functions, more than 200 institutions around the world have already expressed their interest in associating themselves with the U.N. University's efforts.

Japan has offered not only to accommodate the headquarters of the UNU but also to set up some research and training institutes to be incorporated into the U.N. University. Offers have been received not only from governments but also from some private institutions and universities of other countries. Some of these propositions envisage a research consortium to be established jointly by related institutions of several disciplines. This raises hopes for a joint endeavor undertaken by scholars across national and academic barriers.

I must emphasize that the UNU is not only passively responding to offers for association. Rather, it is planning programme activities relating research institutions working in these priority areas: World Hunger, Human and Social Development, and Natural Resources.

We are now working out an association arrangement with two institutes in the Third World, one concerned with nutrition and the other with food conservation. The first is the Institute for Nutrition of Central America and Panama in Guatemala, and the other is the Central Food Technology Research Institute in Mysore, India, which will be asked to study the technology for preventing post-harvest losses of rice, wheat and other food grains while in storage. These are the UNU's first association arrangements made in the field of research on food.

Preparations are now under way to make similar linkage arrangements in the field of human and social development, of which, incidentally, I am in charge. Among the issues we will grapple with is the transfer of technology from industrialized countries to the developing nations in its connection with the development of endogenous technology in the respective countries. Another is a research on development indicators. The UNU will contact various research institutes around the world to work out arrangements for effective joint research on these themes. These subjects have already been studied by the U.N.'s specialized agencies. What we are planning to do is to link long-range research and training efforts by interrelated institutions in different countries in such a way that the UNU could help promote effective international, trans-sectoral data exchange and joint research.

For example, when an institution in an Asian country and another in Latin America are conducting research and training programmes on related themes, the two institutions could exchange the data obtained in the course of their separate research efforts and, if necessary, exchange trainees between them. The UNU will serve as a relay station for such cooperation and exchange.

As it is conceived now, such linkage arrangements would be made for a period of about five years. This is, of course, tentative but we expect that cooperative arrangements of not too short terms could bring more benefit to the participants in the network. I should insist on the fact that all the above points are not made in my official capacity and that I am only stating my personal views in a very free way to give the reader a more vivid image of the U.N. University.

Now, to turn to Japan's role in the founding of this university, we may recall that it was in 1969 that the late U Thant proposed the establishment of a UNU but the same idea had been put forward five years earlier. The initial proposal, recommending Japan as the site of the university, was submitted to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization by an American resident in Japan — Mrs. Elizabeth Rose. She justified her proposition by the fact that Japan was the world's sole victim of nuclear bombardment and was also geographically so situated as to serve as a bridge between the East and West. I think it is extremely interesting that the idea of creating a UNU originated in Japan. It is equally interesting that the appeal was made, not by the Japanese themselves but by a resident American.

At the time Mrs. Rose made the proposal, however, Japan was too preoccupied with economic development to think of playing an active role in international scientific cooperation. This attitude was not necessarily due to sheer selfishness but was in conformity with a "low-posture" tradition from the early years of the Meiji Era when Japan reopened its doors to the outside world following almost three centuries of self-imposed national isolation.



A multinational staff handles the U.N. University business.

For more than 100 years since early Meiji up to that time, the Japanese had been busy absorbing modern political and cultural ideas and technological knowhow from the West and considered themselves still unprepared to help other nations.

As Japan succeeded in the task of postwar rehabilitation and gained some measure of self-confidence in its technological capabilities, the Japanese began to think in the late 1960s that perhaps they could play some useful role in international undertakings. Thus the Japanese Government, with the support of the Diet, responded eagerly to U Thant's appeal and offered to sponsor the establishment of a UNU Headquarters in Japan. She volunteered to donate $100 million to the endorsement of the proposed university.

In those days, the U.N. University was considered to mean an institution international in character but with a setup similar to all ordinary universities — a school with a campus, a faculty and a student body. Thus, many prefectures offered the site for the proposed university in the hope that the successful bidder would get an international faculty and student body and give the prefecture an international opening.

As it was, the character of the UNU has changed subsequently, to the regret of many supporters in



The UNU Centre occupies a floor of this building at Shibuya, a subcenter of Tokyo.

Japan who offered to host it. One thing we must not overlook in reviewing the process leading up to the establishment of the UNU headquarters in Tokyo is the fact that Japan had begun to campaign for the honor of hosting the UNU before the oil crisis of 1973. Subsequently, Japan suffered a serious economic recession and realized anew how heavily dependent she was on imported natural resources and how fragile her 1960s boom was.

Although her burden of financial responsibility for the UNU thus became painfully heavy, Japan has paid in two of the five annual installments of the $100 million donation she had pledged. That we have set up the University Centre here in the face of the unexpected difficulties is worthy of special mention.

Was all that effort worthwhile? Simply stated, I believe Japan is better off having the UNU headquarters as it does than having a university in the conventional sense of the term. A UNU campus with a cosmopolitan faculty and student body would be more colorful and newsworthy but the Tokyo UNU Centre is no less significant in that it serves a very important purpose as the nerve center of a network of many scholars and research institutions around the globe.

Whereas international research networks have so far been centered mostly in the West — in West Europe before World War II and in North America since the war —, the UNU Centre in Tokyo is the first such pivot to be established in the Orient. With this establishment, Japan is beginning to play a significant new international role in the educational and cultural field.

In this role, I believe Japan can share with other nations her own experiences in modernizing and industrializing herself by absorbing Western traditions and linking them profitably with Eastern ways and ideas. Instead of monopolizing such an experience, I think, Japan ought to offer the knowledge she has gained to any country of the world which may care to use it.

From a long-range viewpoint, I believe Japan can contribute better and more to the international community of nations by making the most of the UNU Centre — an establishment modest in appearance but holding a great future potential.

(Synopsis of an oral statement)



'Field Athletics' Catching On in Japan

Photos by KEIJI SHIMIZU and JAPAN ILLUSTRATED



A NEW sport is now catching on well among the Japanese. It is very unique in that participants can train their bodies while enjoying various exercises in a natural setting of fields and forests where ropes and nets are stretched between trees, logs of various sizes arranged in a variety of forms and water wheels and rafts are placed on ponds — all as equipment for exercise.

The new sport, termed Field Athletics by its Japanese creators, represents the organizing of ordinary human acts, such as tree climbing, log carrying, ropewalking and raft riding, into a new system of physical training.

Many of the exercises involved enable participants to do such things as they must have wished to experience at least once in their lifetime — for instance, thrilling travel from tree to tree with the aid of only one rope like Tarzan. Therefore, one can train one's body and mind while enjoying varied exercises along a specified course.

The Field Athletics facilities provide scorecards and "physical strength cards" to participants, but no instructors. After reading simple instructions, therefore, each participant tries his hand at various exercises on his own judgment and records his performance.

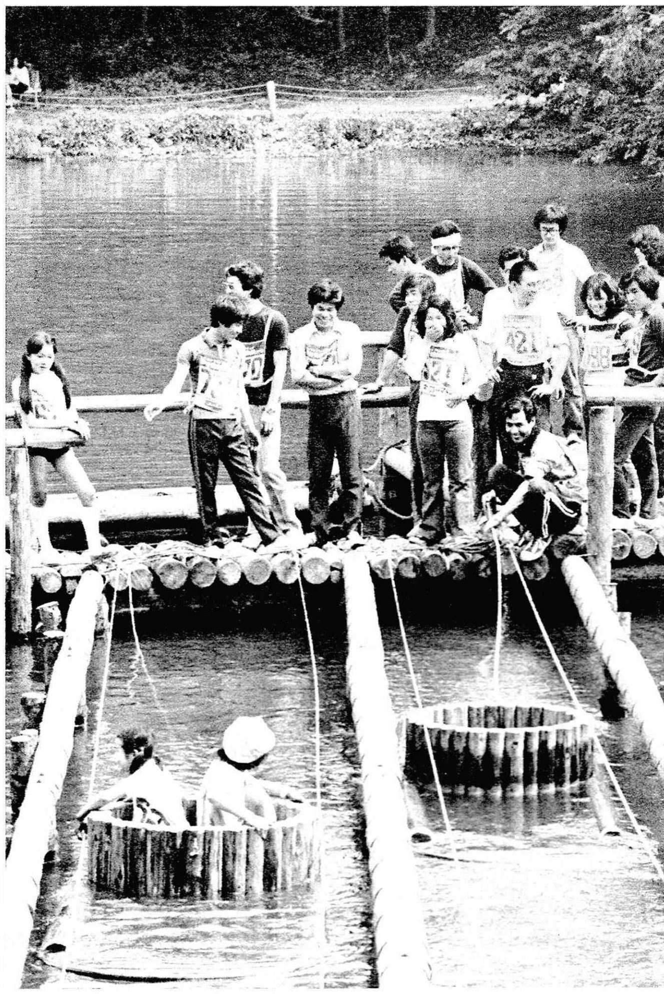
Moreover, proper exercises can be chosen according to sex and age, making it possible for a whole family to enjoy the Field Athletics together. This is another charm of the new sport.

Performance for each exercise is recorded on a scorecard, and at the end of a chosen course, recorded figures are tallied up and entered on the "physical strength card," which is so made out as to indicate not only the participant's athletic abilities, such as muscular strength, endurance and flexibility, but also his mental abilities, including concentration, decision, patience, adventurous spirit and challenging spirit. From these two kinds of abilities combined, the card clearly shows how old the participant is in terms of physical strength.

At present, there are about 60 Field Athletics facilities throughout the country. These facilities, designed to build physical strength through pleasant exercises, are crowded with families and groups of youngsters on holidays. Additional facilities are now under construction in various parts of the country amid the prospect that the new sport will enjoy a boom as a novel form of leisure spending. *(J.S.)*



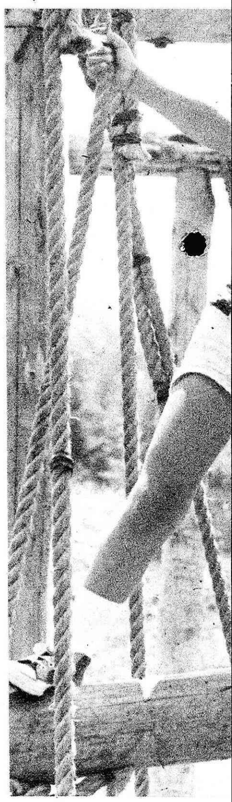


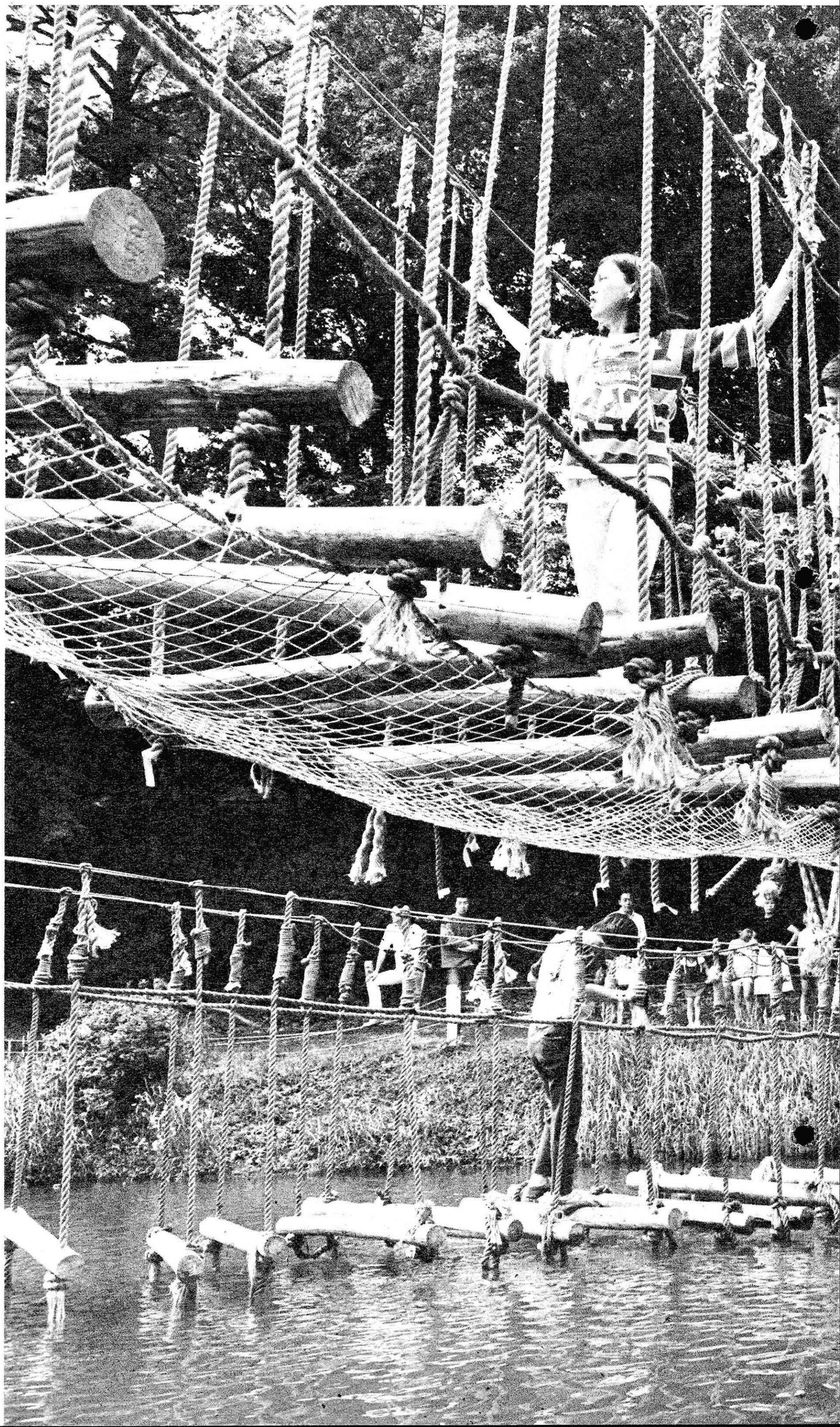


"Field athletics" involve a variety of exercises. Left: Walking on a net stretched between rows of trees is a lot of fun but youngsters find it quite exhausting. Far above: Climbing up and down a hump made of logs is among the easier exercises. Above: In this play, the participants carry themselves through a passage in the pond by pulling their tub with a rope.

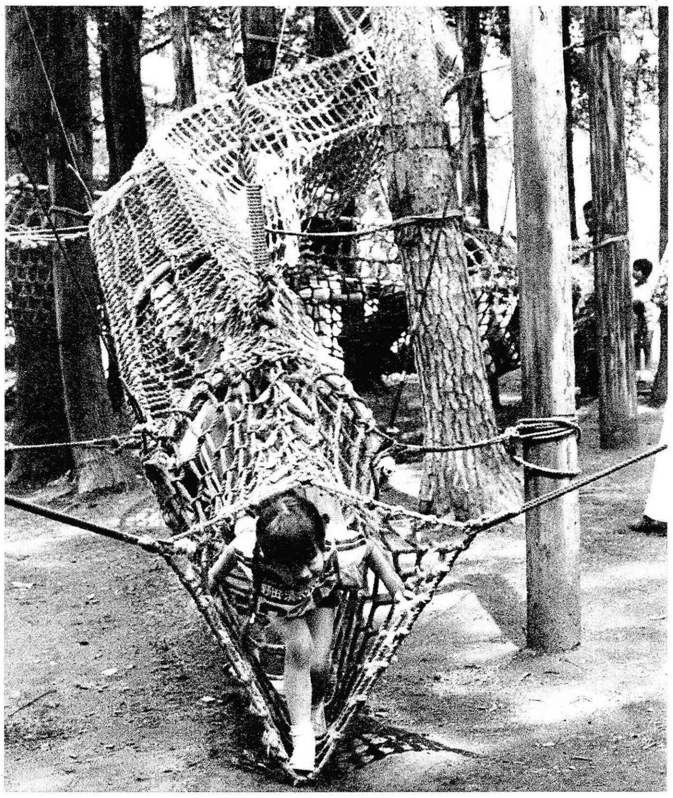




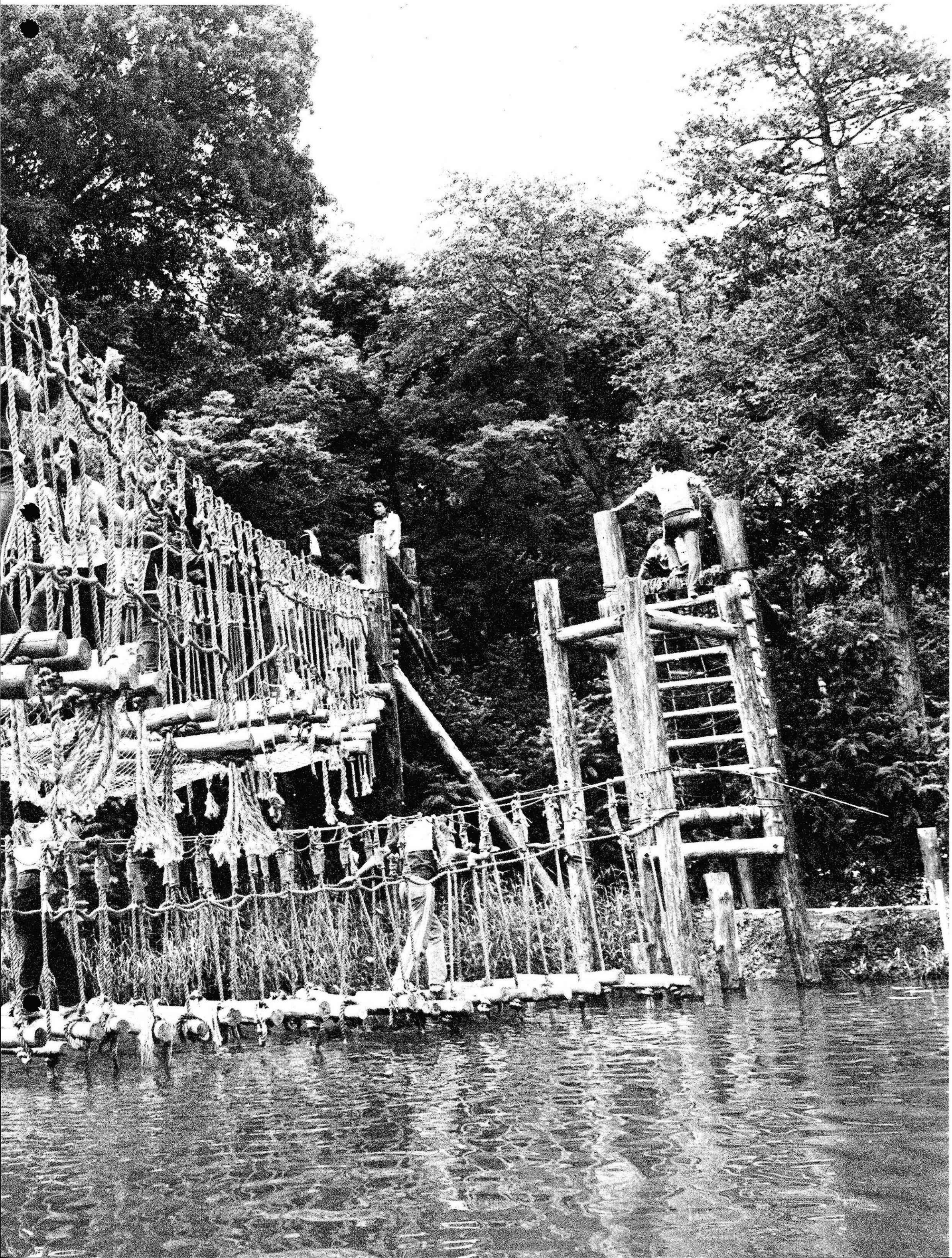












Tiny "Tarzans" get a big kick out of playing with the varied rope and net contrivances. Photos on these pages were taken at field athletics ranges in Noda, Chiba Prefecture, and Hakone.

Current Topics

Japanese Adventurer Returns From the Arctic

Naomi Uemura, a 35-year-old adventurer, returned to Tokyo on May 16 after completing a solitary year-and-a-half 12,000-km trek across the barren ice and snow fields of the Arctic on dog sleds.

Uemura started on his journey at the end of December 1974 from Kekertuk, Greenland, and arrived safely at Kotzebue, Alaska, on May 9, after negotiating the 12,000-km distance across Arctic wasteland.

It was the longest one-man trek to be carried out across the Arctic Zone. Uemura's frost-bitten face gave an eloquent proof of the hardships he had undergone during his record-shattering trip on dog sleds.

Uemura, who is also an alpinist, had conquered the highest peaks of the five continents in the world, including Mt. Everest, prior to his Arctic adventure.

Speaking at a press conference on his return to Tokyo, Uemura said his greatest concern during the trip was how to survive each day. "I did not know what would happen to me every day of the trip. I did not have time to think whether my trip would be a success or not," Uemura said.

Uemura is currently preparing a book on his trip, complete with photographs. After this work, he said he may contemplate a similar trek across the Antarctic Zone.



Blind Girl Becomes Graduate Student

A 29-year-old blind woman has been admitted into the post-graduate school of Okayama University, Okayama.

Miss Akiko Shibata, the first blind female graduate student in Japan, studies English literature and aspires to a teaching career. In the difficult entrance examinations for admission, she answered the questions in Braille.



One major difficulty she has experienced in her study is that her English-Japanese dictionary in Braille is too bulky. "It consists of as many as 70 volumes and I have to take out one from among them to look for a particular word," she explains.

Miss Shibata became totally blind when she was a second grader because of retinal detachment. She was admitted to the Okayama School for the Blind where she completed her primary and secondary education.

In 1967, she enrolled in a course at Tokyo University of Education for training teachers for schools for the blind. There she learned acupuncture, massage and other subjects.

But she became interested in English and quit the school in 1969 to study the language. In 1971, she was admitted to Notre Dame Seishin University in Okayama where she majored in English literature.

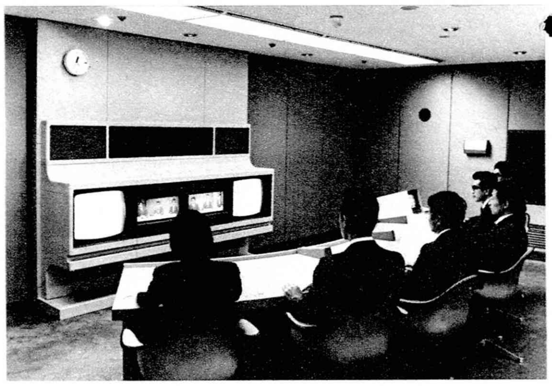
Upon graduation, she asked Okayama University to admit her. The school allowed her to attend classes at its graduate school as a nonregular student. Last November, the school told her that she could sit for the extrance examinations for the 1976 school year.

Conferring 'Face-to-Face' 500 Kilometers Apart

Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Public Corp. has developed the world's first color television system for holding a business conference at two points hundreds of miles apart. The system, now under experiment in Tokyo and Osaka, may revolutionize the way businessmen hold conferences and even their way of speaking.

With this system, businessmen can confer with their counterparts in another city via color television. It is under experiment at the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo and the Royal Hotel in Osaka, where special conference rooms have been reserved for the purpose.

Each conference room has a long semicircular table with six seats which face four 28-inch TV screens. Two rectangular screens project the images of six persons at a time while two square screens on both sides are used for close-ups. Conferees also have other kinds of equipment at their disposal — a facsimile system for transmitting drawings, charts, tables and memos used in the course of conversation. These can be projected on the two side screens.



Also available are a slide projector and a device for "secret conversation" designed to prevent the listeners temporarily from hearing what the persons at the other end of the line are saying.

"The main advantage of a TV conference," an NTT engineer says, "is that you can save both the time and money required when you have to travel a long distance to meet people on business."

The cost for an hour-long TV conference, in which up to 20 persons can participate, is ¥30,000 at present. The charge covers the services in both Tokyo and Osaka. But the charge will go up to about ¥110,000 per hour when the service is switched from an experimental to commercial basis this autumn.

1975 Pleasure Trips Totaled 427 Million

Japanese people made a total of 427 million pleasure trips in 1975 spending an estimated ¥2.72 trillion, according to a Government tourism white paper issued recently.

Statistically speaking, this means each Japanese made four pleasure trips in the year. The figures represent a 0.9 per cent increase over 1974 in the number of pleasure trips made and a 13 per cent rise in spending on such trips. However, adjusted for price inflation, the total expenditure was about the same as in the previous year.

The white paper said that a trend toward slower increases in Japanese tourism activities appeared in 1974. This was mainly attributed to the protracted recession and greater propensity for saving. The

trend is particularly noticeable in Japanese overseas tourism which had been rising at an annual rate of 40 to 60 per cent until 1973.

Japanese overseas tourism slowed down suddenly in 1974 due to the oil crisis, rapid price increases and the recession. In fiscal 1975, a total of 2,470 million Japanese went abroad, a 6 per cent increase over the previous fiscal year, according to the white paper.

The United States drew the biggest portion of Japanese overseas tourists at 750,000, followed by Taiwan's 420,000, Hong Kong's 380,000, and South Korea's 360,000. Of these tourists, men totaled 1,762,000 and women 573,000.

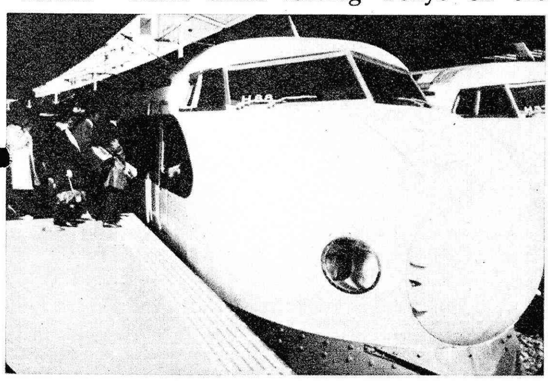
On the other hand, foreign tourists visiting Japan increased by 6 per cent to 812,000 in 1975, according to the white paper.

Photo: Foreign tourists in Nikko, one of the most popular sight-seeing resorts



'Bullet' Carries Billionth Fare

The Shinkansen Line of the Japanese National Railways carried its 1 billionth passenger on the morning of May 25. To commemorate the event, JNR presented souvenirs to 532 passengers selected from among the 1,000 booked on four "Hikari" bullet trains leaving Tokyo on the



morning of May 25.

Since the line was opened in 1964, Shinkansen superexpress trains have run a total of 374 million kilometers, equivalent to 486 round trips between the earth and the moon. Moreover, not a single train accident affecting people, passengers or otherwise, has occurred during its 12-year service.

Lot drawing was held in a room at Tokyo Station in the presence of JNR President Fumio Takagi and three of his predecessors who had been in office since the Shinkansen line was inaugurated.

Japan's First Escalator-Pedestrian-Bridge

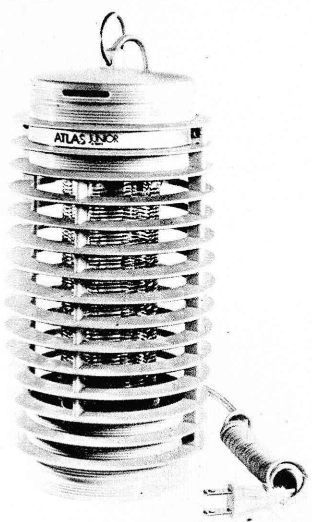
Japan's first escalator-pedestrian-bridge made its debut at an intersection in front of Kinshicho railway station in downtown Tokyo. The escalator, measuring two meters wide and 12 meters long, was built by the Construction Ministry and is controlled from an office located about six kilometers away through a television camera.



Insecticidal Lamp

An insecticidal lamp for home use, "Atlas Junior," was put on sale by Asahitrans Co. recently. Its retail price is ¥16,000.

The device, which "electrocutes" insects, consists of a lamp with an electricity-charged wire



Current Topics

coiled around it. The lamp emits light with a special wavelength which attracts mosquitos and other insects. The device is covered with a protective plastic-ring frame 31 centimeters high and 13.5 centimeters across.

The device, using 100-volt power, is suspended from the wall or ceiling. When it falls to the floor, power is cut automatically.

Pendant-Type Lighter

A pendant-type miniature cigarette lighter, featuring light weight and fuel-flint reloading, was recently put on sale by Katagiri "Kily" Accessories K.K.

The key-shaped lighter is made of brass, with a brass chain attached to it. It is available in five different colors — gold, silver, red, blue and yellow — and priced at ¥1,300.



New Color TV Set

Sony Corporation plans to put on the market this autumn a new model of the 'Trinitron' color television set with what the company claims to be



the world's largest known picture dimension (54.5 by 69.1 centimeters, or 81.7 centimeters diagonally).

The de luxe console-type TV set is equipped with a two-way speaker system and a video terminal that can be directly connected to a video-casette player/recorder. This new product, along with its sister model, a 32-inch color monitor TV, will be useful particularly for such purposes as transmitting medical information, in-house training and classroom work, as well as home entertainment, Sony says. It will be priced at about ¥1.5 million, and the color monitor TV, ¥1 million.

A Tricycle Without Pedals or Chain Makes Debut

A tricycle with neither pedals nor chain which runs lightly on the road like a whirligig beetle on water has been developed. It is appropriately dubbed "Green Spider" and is used mainly for exercise and as a sport. The mechanics of generating movement are patterned after the backward movement of a skater and the swishing of the tail of a fish (to the right and left) as it swims through the water.



The two rear wheels of the novel vehicle are narrowed and widened by the power of the rider's legs and this action, when continued, makes each wheel depict contrasting sine curves and propels the vehicle.

Although it takes some skill to start the tricycle moving, a little practice is sufficient to solve the problem. All you have to do is to place your feet on the steps and repeat the action of narrowing and widening the distance between your legs. A speed of from 10 to 20 kilometers an hour can be obtained. Because it has three wheels, it is more stable than a bicycle and can be enjoyed even by children and women.

The Green Spider is 130 centimeters long and the handle is from 100 cm. to 85 cm. high. It weighs 12.2 kilograms and the rear wheels are equipped with double brakes. It is a very light and handy vehicle and can be used for sport or as a toy for children. The tricycle can also be utilized for errands in factories with large premises.

Tokyo to Implement Strict NOx Standards

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government recently announced new tolerance levels for nitrogen oxides (NOx) to reduce the amount of the air pollutant. The new standards, described by experts as the strictest ever in Japan, are scheduled to go into force in fiscal 1977.

NOx is considered a major cause of photochemical smog. The new standards will apply to industrial and other establishments that discharge 1,000 cubic meters or more of gases containing NOx per hour.

The Metropolitan Government's Environmental Protection Bureau said the new tolerance levels will restrict the discharge of NOx to 148 ppm. in the case of existing power stations and to 60 ppm. for new power plants.

Ordinary industrial factories already in operation will be allowed to discharge up to 120 ppm. of the air pollutant, while new factories must limit the discharge to less than 60 ppm., the bureau explained.

The new tolerance levels are 30 to 50 per cent stricter than those set by the Central Government under the Law Concerning Prevention of Air Pollution in the case of new factories and about 50 per cent in the case of existing factories.

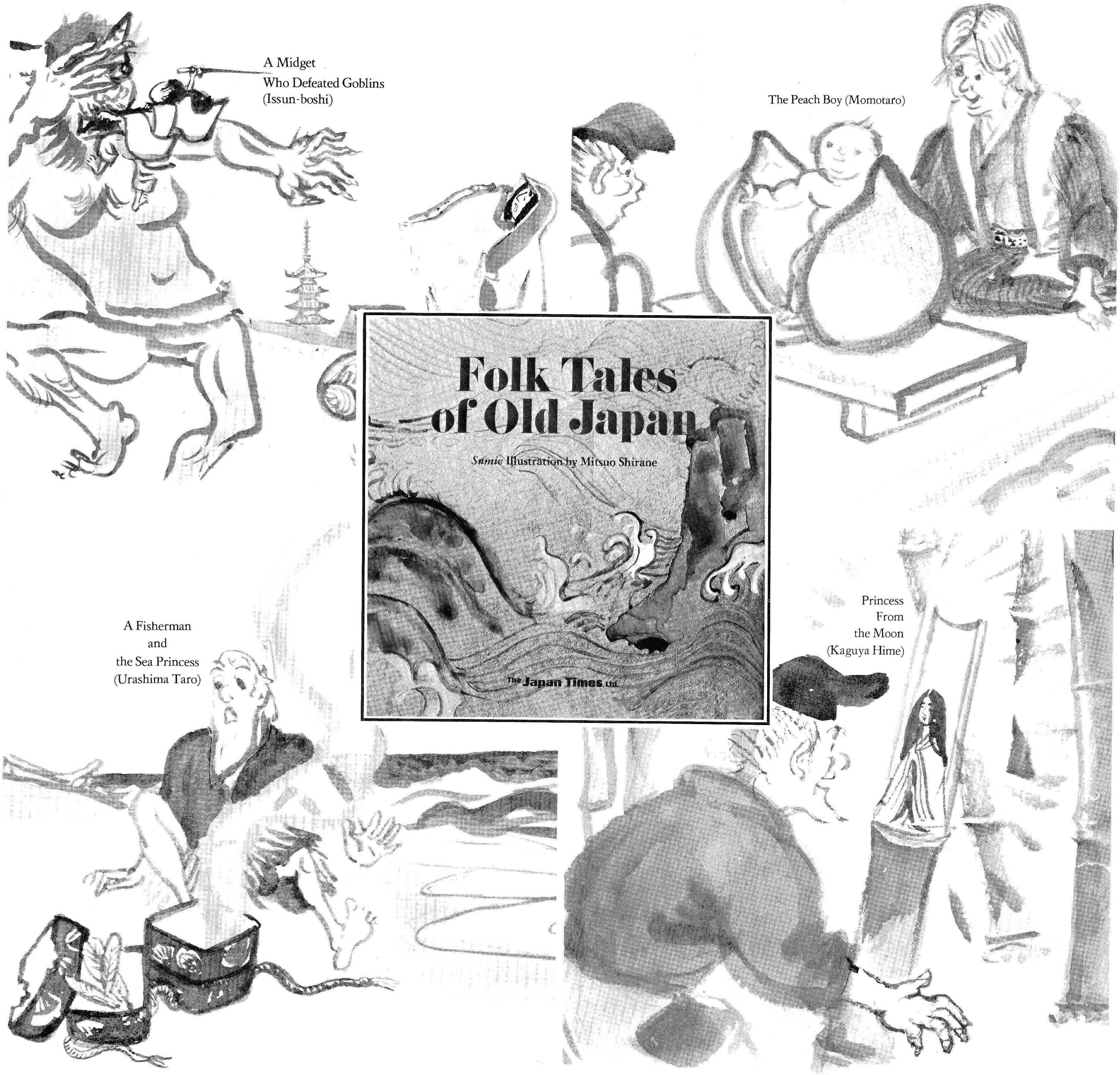
They are even stricter than the rigid tolerance levels on NOx set earlier by local governments in Chiba and Kanagawa prefectures where industrial air pollution has reached a serious level.

Factories in Tokyo must reduce their discharge of NOx to nearly a half when the new standards go into force.

The measure will reduce by about 30 per cent the total volume of NOx discharged by factories and other fixed pollution-causing sources, the bureau said.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government intends to enforce the new standards in the form of "administrative guidance" at first and will eventually incorporate them in a local government ordinance.

The bureau said that Tokyo needs to tighten control on the discharge of NOx by automobiles, too, if it wants to drastically cut the amount of pollutant in the air. Cars account for 70 per cent of all NOx present in Tokyo's air, it said.



Folk Tales of Old Japan

Sumie Illustration by Mitsuo Shirane

- This is a collection of 16 Japanese folk tales which have been told and retold by our ancestors through the centuries and which still remain popular among Japanese children today.

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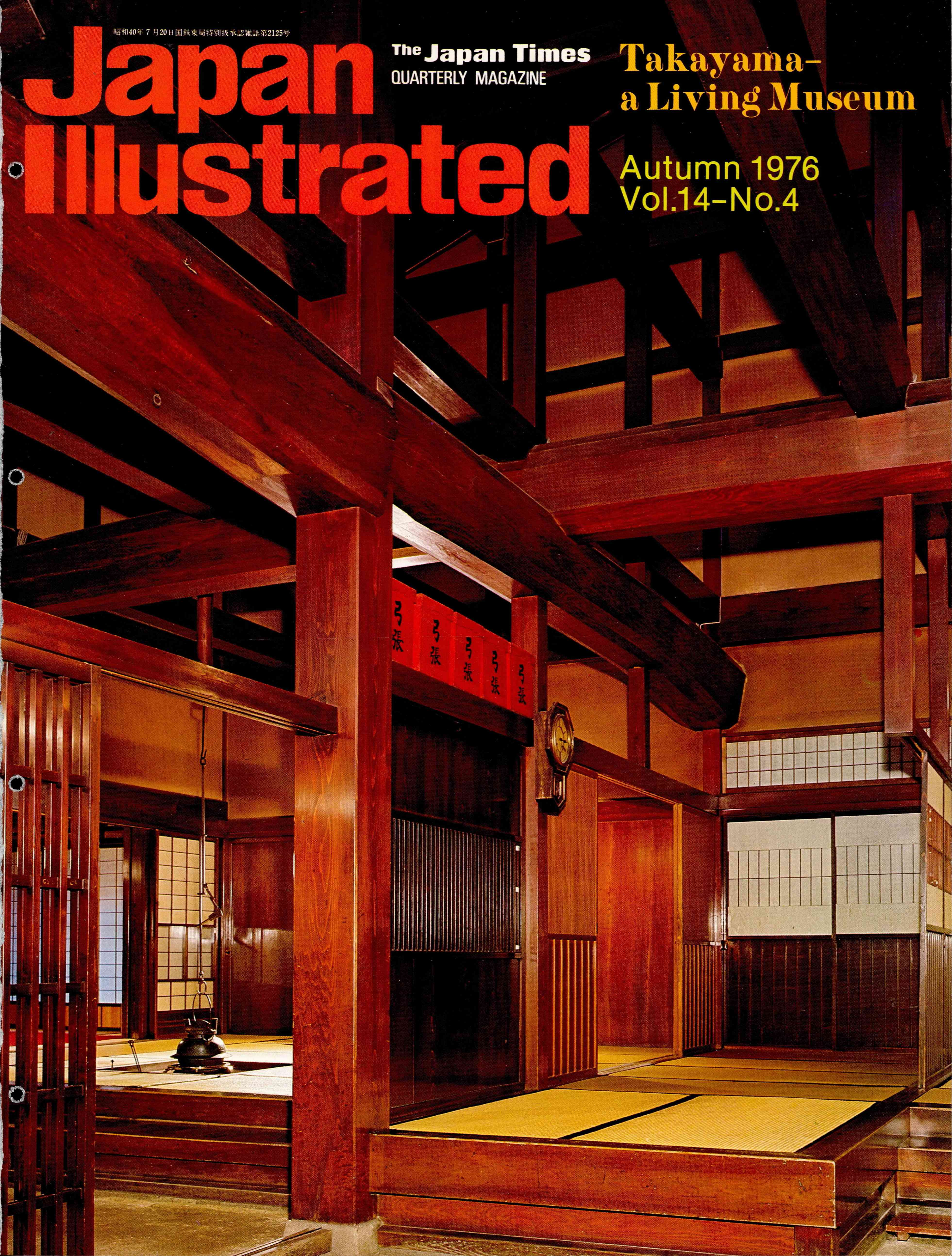
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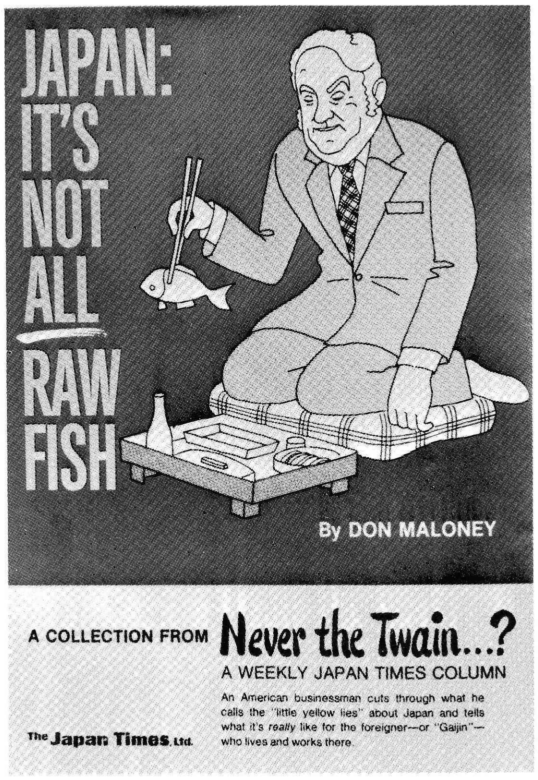
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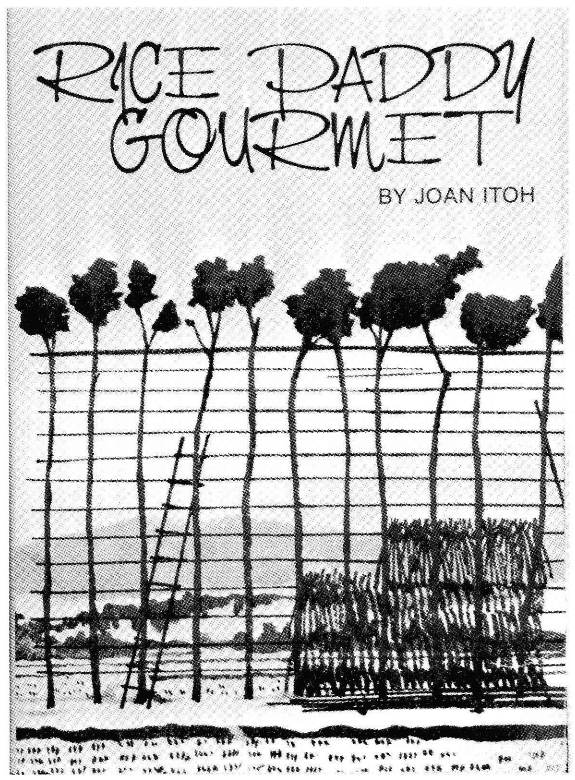


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by Joan Itoh

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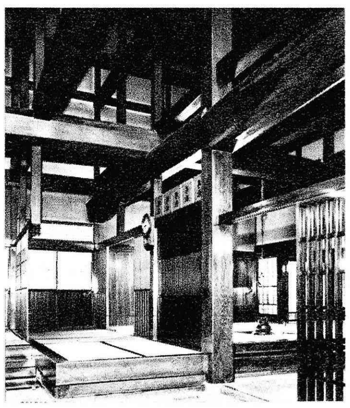
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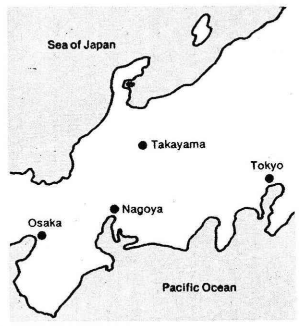
Cover photo: Inside of the Yoshijima Residence, a wealthy merchant's Edo Period house in Takayama (Photo by Nobuaki Fukui/See pp. 2-13)

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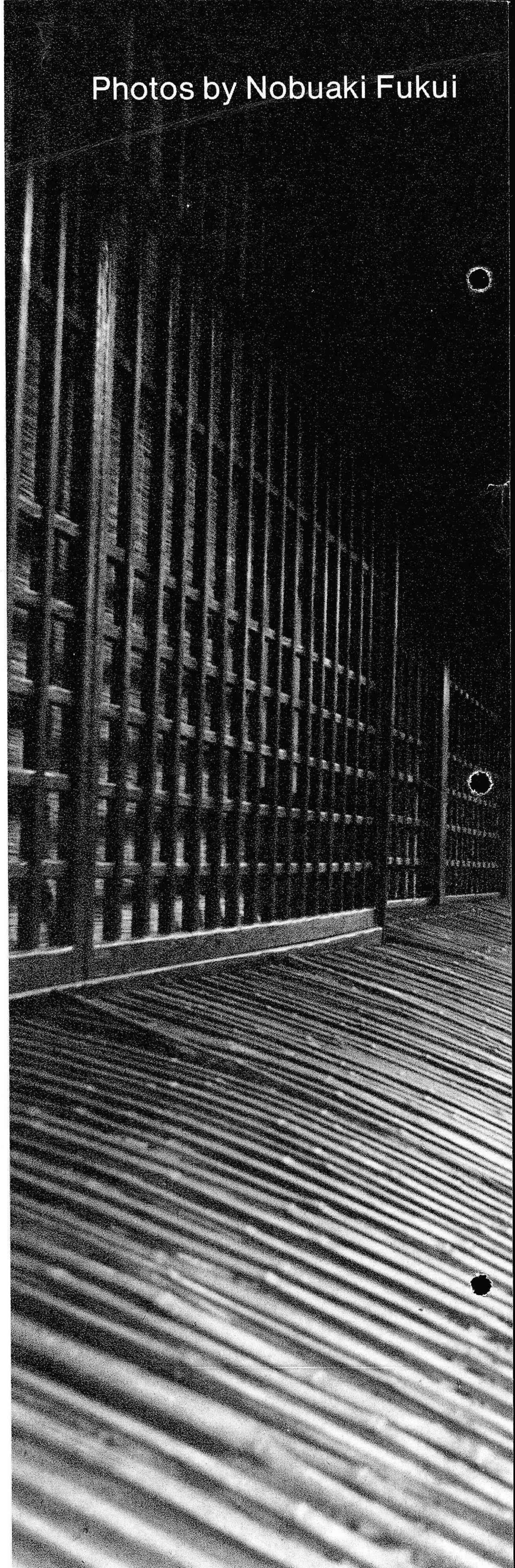
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Takayama— a Living Museum



By Junichi Saito



THERE is a mountainous region by the name of Hida on the west side of the "Japan Alps" with a range of high peaks more than 3,000 meters above the sea. It is located in the middle part of Honshu—the main island of Japan. Takayama, which forms the heart of the region, is a small city of about 50,000 people. It has a long winter that keeps it under snow for nearly half of the year.

Takayama is not an average provincial town. It is a town boasting a highly refined, unique urban culture, created through an exquisite blending of cultures transplanted from the ancient capitals of Nara, Kyoto and Edo (now Tokyo) and excellent carpentry with a long history and tradition peculiar to the mountainous Hida region. At the same time, Takayama has an age-old simple rural culture as typified by various traditional utensils for daily use. And the coexistence of these two entirely different cultures is the very source of Takayama's characteristic charm.

This region, famed for high-grade timber, has from olden times produced numerous skilled carpenters and craftsmen boasting superb woodworking techniques. From the eighth to the 12th century, the people of Hida, instead of paying taxes, took on an obligation to go to Nara and Kyoto and work for the construction of Imperial palaces, Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples each for a year. Because of their advanced skills, they won a high reputation as *Hida-no-Takumi* (Master Carpenters of Hida). When returning home, they brought back with them new urban architectural techniques and culture, transplanting them to the Hida region in general and Takayama in particular. In this way, Takayama, a remote mountain community, became closely related to the refined culture of Nara and Kyoto.

In 741 A.D., when Buddhist culture thrived in Nara, then the capital of Japan, a ***kokubunji*** (state-established provincial temple) was built in Takayama by order of Emperor Shomu, resulting in a gradual growth of a town around it. The temple had a seven-story pagoda, but met with such disasters as fires and storms. What remains today is a three-story pagoda constructed in 1820.

Towards the end of *Sengoku-jidai* (the Age of Civil Wars), a warlord named Kanamori Nagachika pacified the Hida Region in 1585 and built a castle in Takayama. The Kanamori Clan endeavored to build a town after the fashion of Kyoto, then the capital of Japan. Takayama has since developed and prospered as the hub of political, economic and cultural activities in the Hida Region.

In laying out the town, the Kanamori Clan gave the Miyagawa River flowing through it the same role as that of the Kamo River in Kyoto, assigning the area west of the river to farming, and earmarking the eastern side for housing and commercial zones. Roads were laid out to form a neat grid as was the case with Kyoto, and many temples were built at the foot of the eastern mountains.

Six generations of the Kanamori family ruled the region for 107 years. They introduced the refined, elegant culture of Kyoto and the transplanted culture was supported and developed by *Hida-no-Takumi,* craftsmen with highly advanced woodworking skills. *Hida Shunkei-nuri,* Takayama's renowned lacquer ware, is a typical product of such process of cultural development.

Early in the 17th century, the Kanamori family invited lacquer craftsmen from Kyoto to help develop the industry. The enterprise has produced a veritable work of art comprising Hida's high-grade wood, excellent woodworking skill and advanced lacquer craftsmanship. The lacquer ware, giving full play to the beauty of natural wood grain, gleams in gold color. A major characteristic is that its charming beauty increases with the passage of time. At present, an excellent collection of *Hida Shunkei-nuri* wares, produced from the 17th century to this day, is on display at the Shunkei Kaikan Hall on the west bank of the Miyagawa River.

All chieftains of the Kanamori Clan were ardent lovers of *Sado* (tea ceremony) and they spared no effort to encourage the manufacture of pottery for tea. Takayama's pottery is represented by *Shibukusa-yaki,* which, it is said, was also originated by potters invited from Kyoto in the first half of the 17th century. Takayama's potters, assimilating Kyoto's techniques, turned out colorful and sturdy pottery, which has since become a typical product of Takayama's craftsmanship.

In this way, while the Kanamori Clan governed Takayama, a refined culture of the Kyoto style was developed in the town. But then the ruler of Takayama was replaced, producing no small repercussions on the town's cultural scene.

In 1692, the Kanamori family's rule finally came to an end, and Takayama was placed under the direct control of the Tokugawa Shogunate, which set up a *Jinya* (manor house) in the town and dispatched officials to govern it. The direct rule of the Tokugawa Shogunate lasted for 177 years until the Meiji Restoration. In the meantime, Takayama became closely linked with Edo, then the seat of the Tokugawa Shogunate government, both politically and economically. Moreover, the newly introduced gorgeous cultural style of Edo was added to the elegant culture of the Kyoto style, which had developed in Takayama. And this mixed culture was further developed into Takayama's own by the wealth of Takayama merchants and the skills of *Hida-no-Takumi.*

Such cultural diversity of Takayama becomes evident during the Takayama Festival held twice a year in spring and autumn. On the festival day, resplendent floats with various elaborate motifs and decorations are drawn around in the town by people wearing the costumes of the Edo Period. These floats represent the cream of *Hida-no-Takumi's* craftsmanship. The moving puppets on the floats and elaborate carvings around the floats are really marvelous works of art.

These floats, handed down from generation to generation, are the common properties of neighborhood associations in the town. Except on





Left: The elegant beauty presented by the intricate bamboo-cedar latticework adds to the charm of this old town. Below: Entrance to a sake brewery. The large ball made with needle leaves of cedar is a symbol of the trade.

the festival days, they are kept in special storehouses. In recent years, however, some of them have come to be displayed all the year round in the large Yatai Kaikan (Float Hall) for the benefit of visiting tourists.

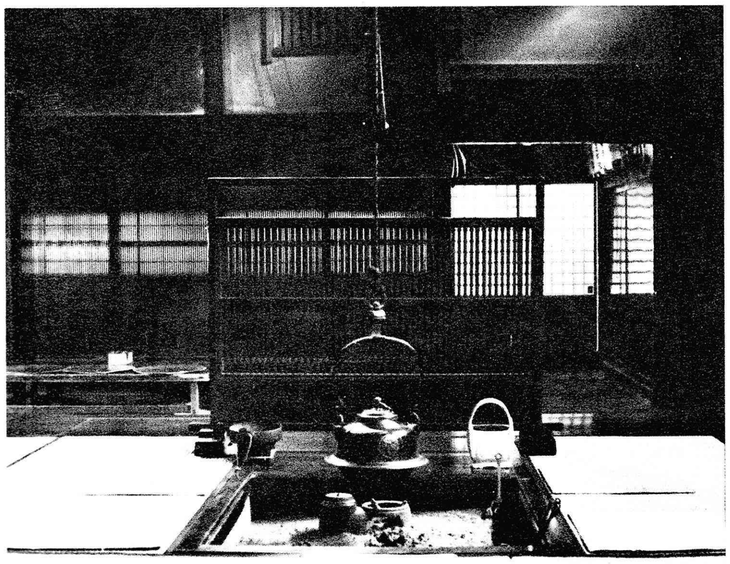
On the eastern side of the Miyagawa River are rows of old houses built more than three centuries ago. Their low eaves and beautiful window lattices are reminiscent of Kyoto's townscape. The Kusakabe Residence, a wealthy merchant's house now used as the Folk Craft Hall, and the Yoshijima Residence are typical of merchants' residences of the Edo Period. Built with Hida's high-grade timber, they are concrete proof of the quintessence of *Hida-no-Takumi's* carpentry. The front of these residences, marked by deep eaves and delicate latticework, impresses visitors with their staid beauty. Inside the residences, the large central pillar and heavy beams linked together look truly reassuring. Particularly wonderful is the deft use of high windows. That is, the changing intensity of light coming in through them causes a delicate change in shades and color tones in the rooms as the day wears on.

Meanwhile, *Ichii-itto-bori* carvings of yew trees produced in the region are also traditional craft items retaining the skills of Hida artisans. A large variety of carvings are available, such as masks, Buddhist images and wall ornaments as well as diverse floor ornaments.

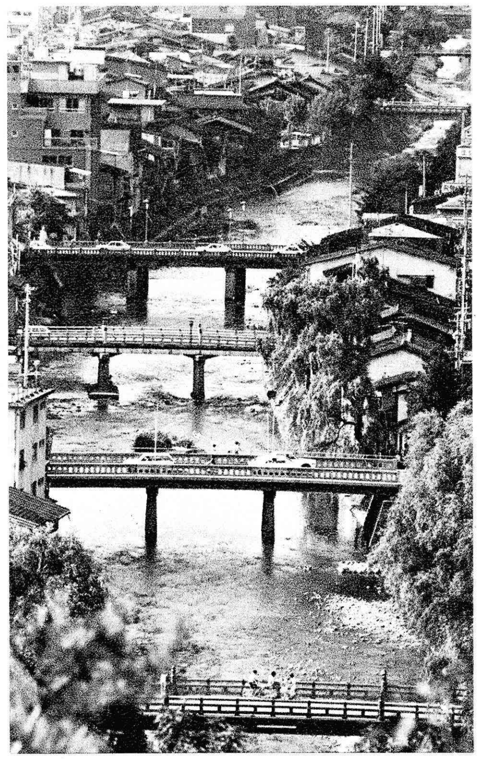
Takayama thus built up a refined, high-quality urban culture of the Kyoto and Edo styles from the days of the Kanamori Clan's rule to the period of direct control by the Tokugawa Shogunate.

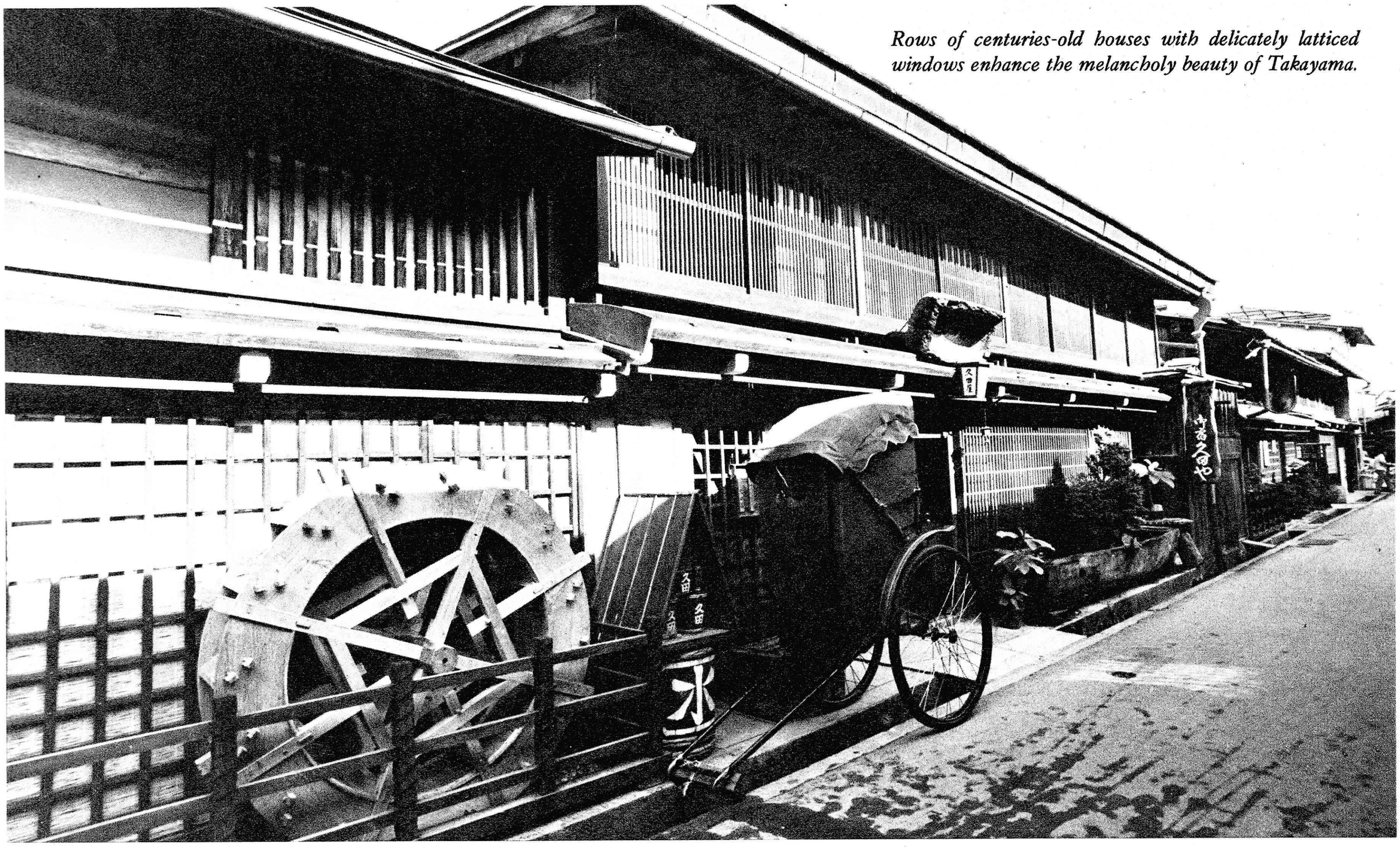
ON the other hand, Takayama has its own indigenous culture, whose simple, rustic features are manifest in the traditional utensils for daily use. These articles—products of abundant wood of high quality and the long snowy winter—represent

Below: Interior of the Kusakabe Residence with its sunken hearth and pothook. Right: Front view of a malt shop. Far right: Miyagawa River flowing through Takayama









Rows of centuries-old houses with delicately latticed windows enhance the melancholy beauty of Takayama.

the local craftsmanship handed down from generation to generation.

On display in the Folklore Village, set up in the western suburbs of Takayama, is a collection of varied utensils which were used until recently, such as farm implements, sleighs, sericultural tools, and kitchen utensils, all exuding the atmosphere of Hida people's traditional life amid mountains. Moreover, in a corner of the village are 10-odd reconstructed private houses of the Hida region, removed from Takayama and vicinity to form an excellent open-air museum for preserving the traditional housing pattern of the region.

Furthermore, farmhouses of *gasshozukuri* style (houses with steep rafter roofs) are also symbolic of the rural aspects of Takayama's culture. These houses are still retained intact in an area called Shirakawago, which can be reached by car in about two hours from Takayama. It is a small settlement nestling in a deep valley, which it is said was formed by fugitives of the Taira Clan, which went under after wielding overwhelming political power in Kyoto around the 12th century.

These houses are large four or five-story wooden structures in which a very large family can live together. This unique building style cannot be found in any other part of Japan. What makes these houses still more remarkable is the fact that they are built without using a single nail. Many modern architects marvel at the ingenuity with which carpenters of another century met the needs of the local inhabitants so well with the limited materials available to them.

The Hida Region in general and Takayama in particular thus retain a very unique culture nurtured by a long history and tradition, which never fails to fascinate visitors. In recent years, Takayama has markedly gained in popularity for this reason, attracting growing numbers of people from all parts of Japan.



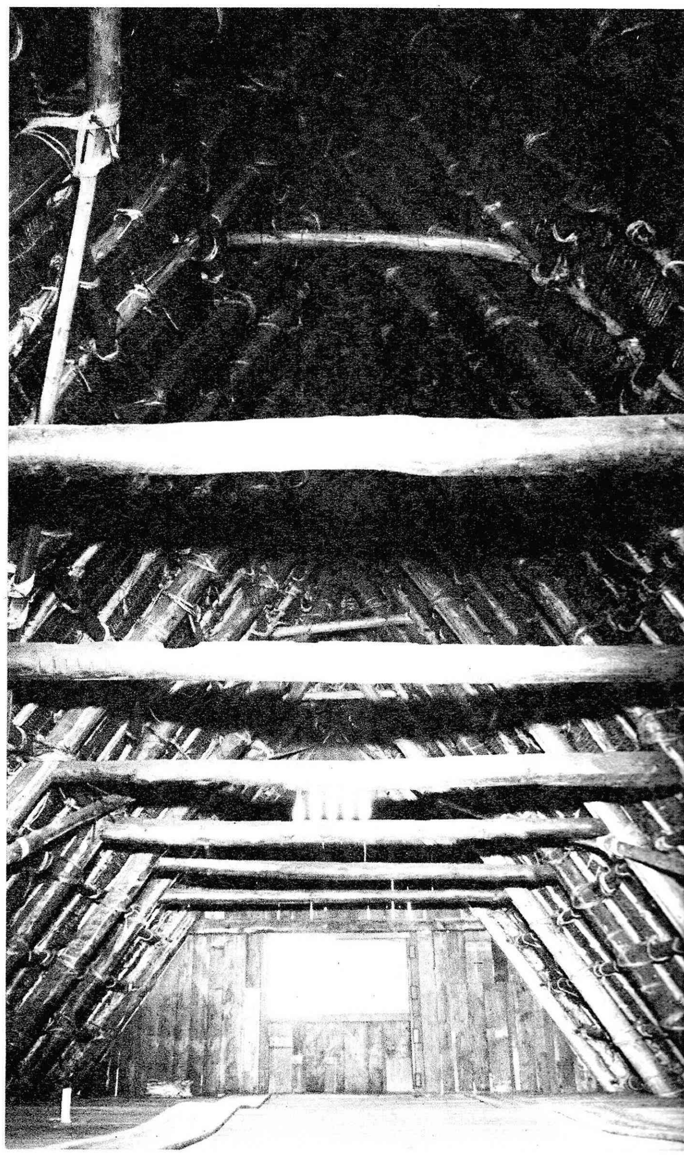
Front view of the Kusakabe Residence, one of the ancient houses in Takayama. It now serves as a folk craft museum.



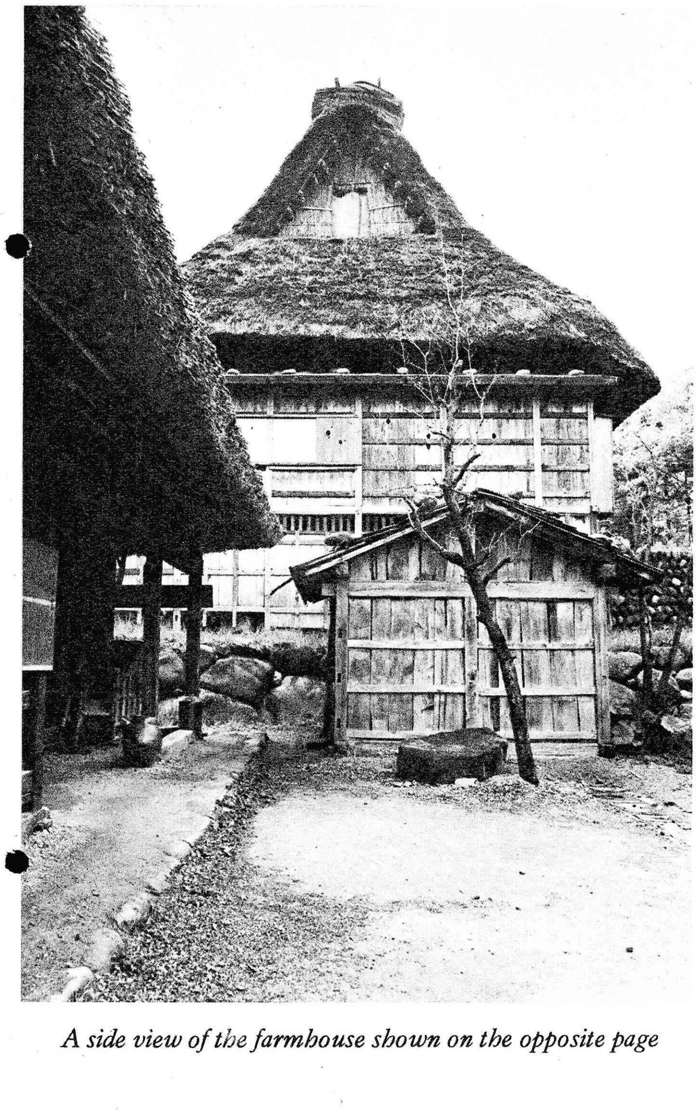
A typical farmhouse of Hida region, reconstructed in a corner of the Folklore Village



A farmhouse with firewood piled up under its eaves



A garret of ''gasshozukuri''-style farmhouse suggests the dimensions of the structure.



A side view of the farmhouse shown on the opposite page



A farmhouse with its imaginative decorations

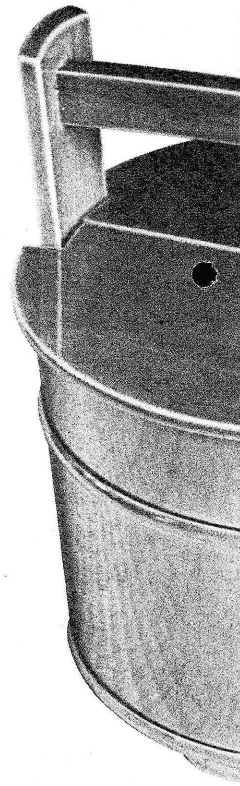


Above: A four-story "gasshozukuri"-style farmhouse

Opposite page: Tall "gasshozukuri"-style farmhouses dot the landscape of peaceful Shirakawa Village.



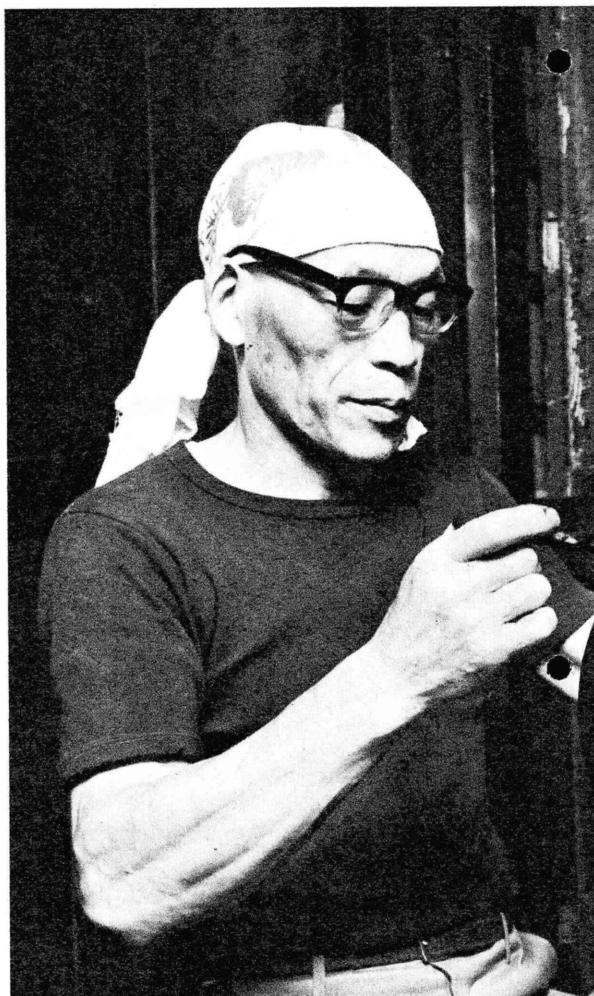




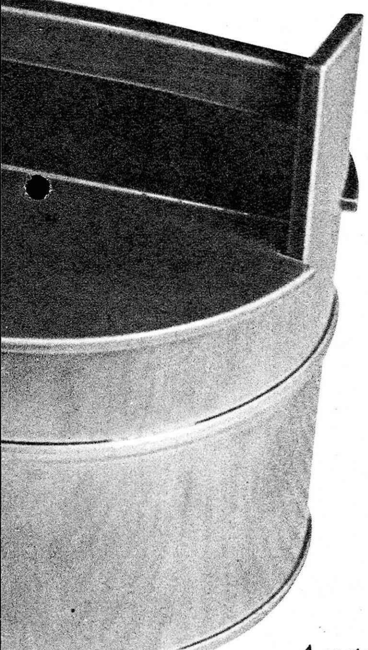
A flower-vase of ''Shibukusa-yaki'' pottery



A young potter fashions a tea bowl of ''Shibukusa-yaki'' style.



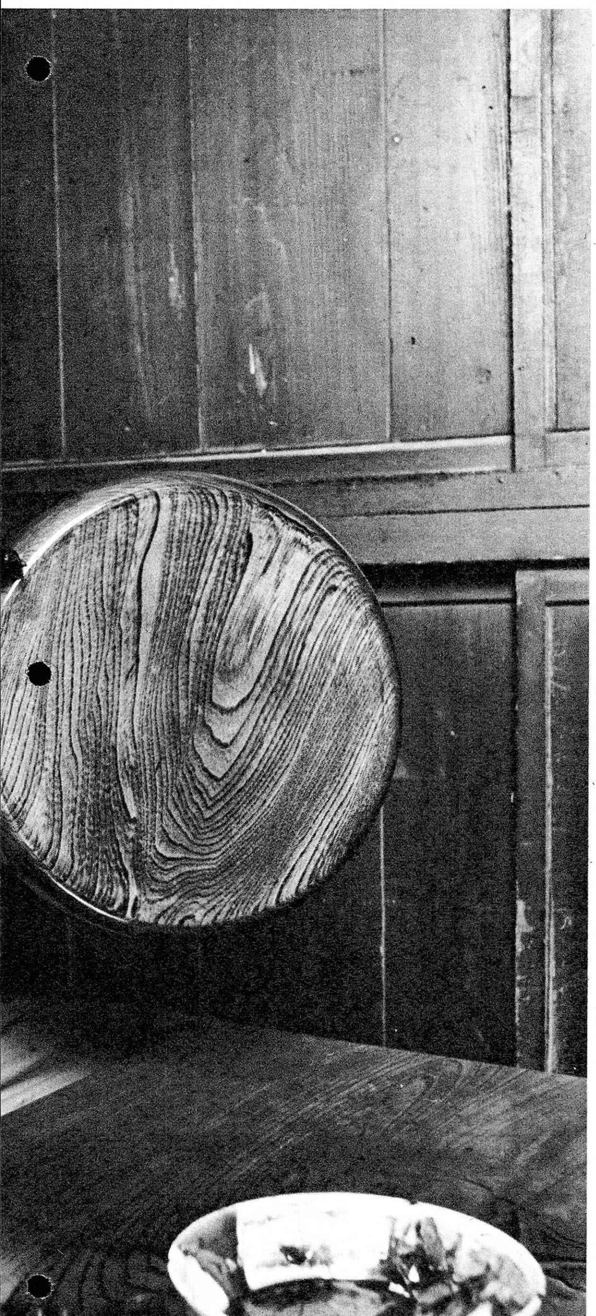
A lacquer craftsman at his workshop



A water-pail of "Shunkei-nuri" lacquerware

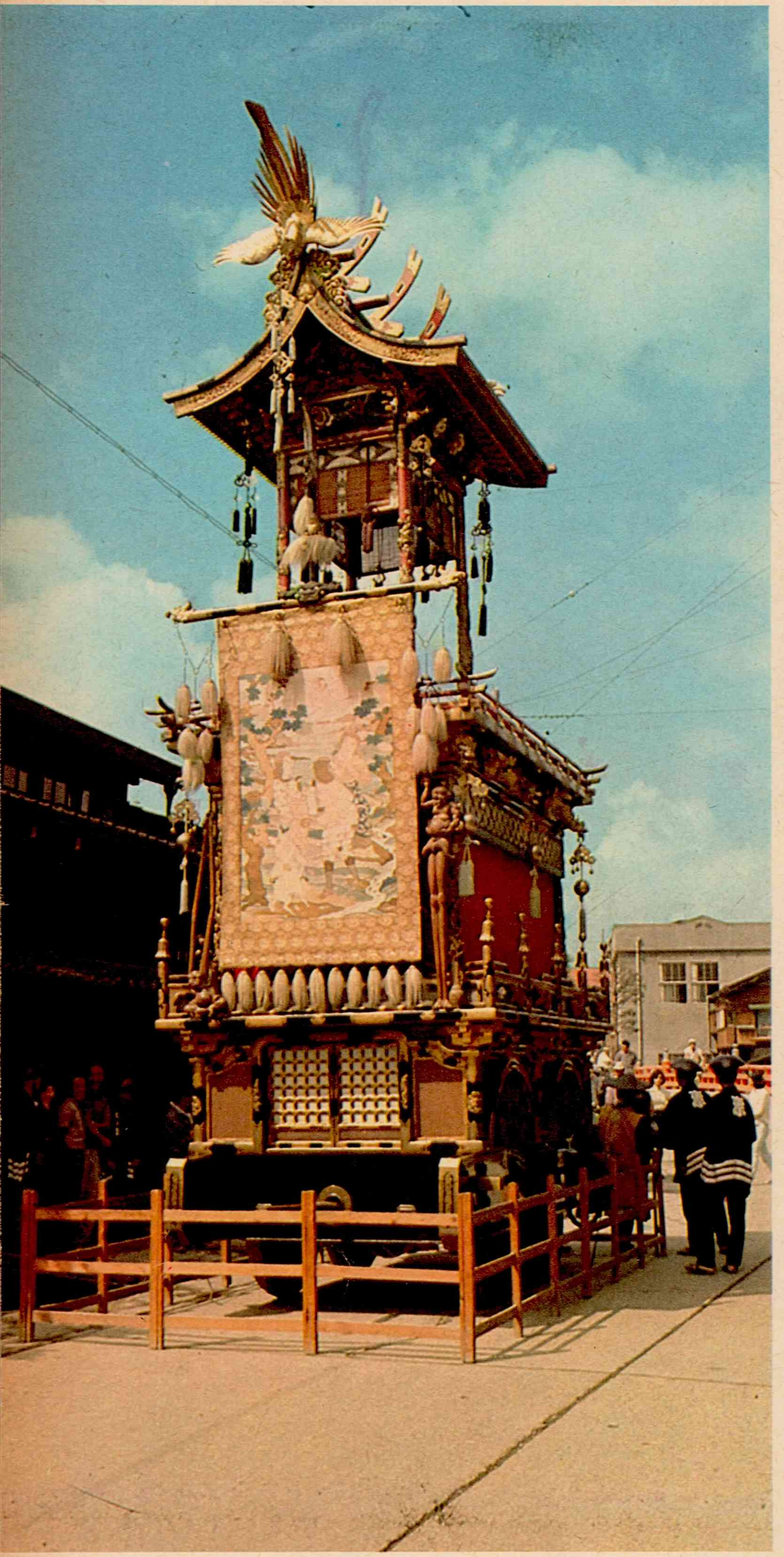


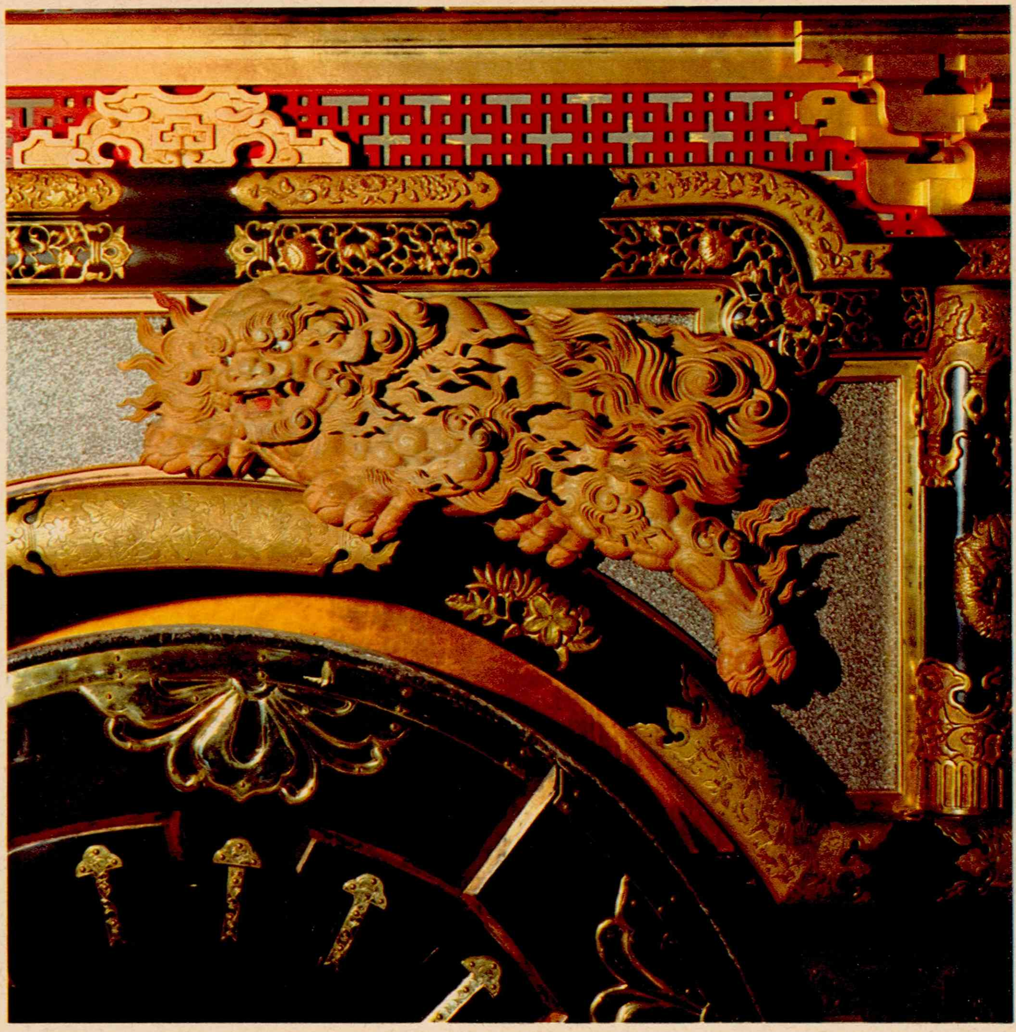
"Hannya" (female demon) is a popular subject of "Ichii-itto-bori" sculpture.

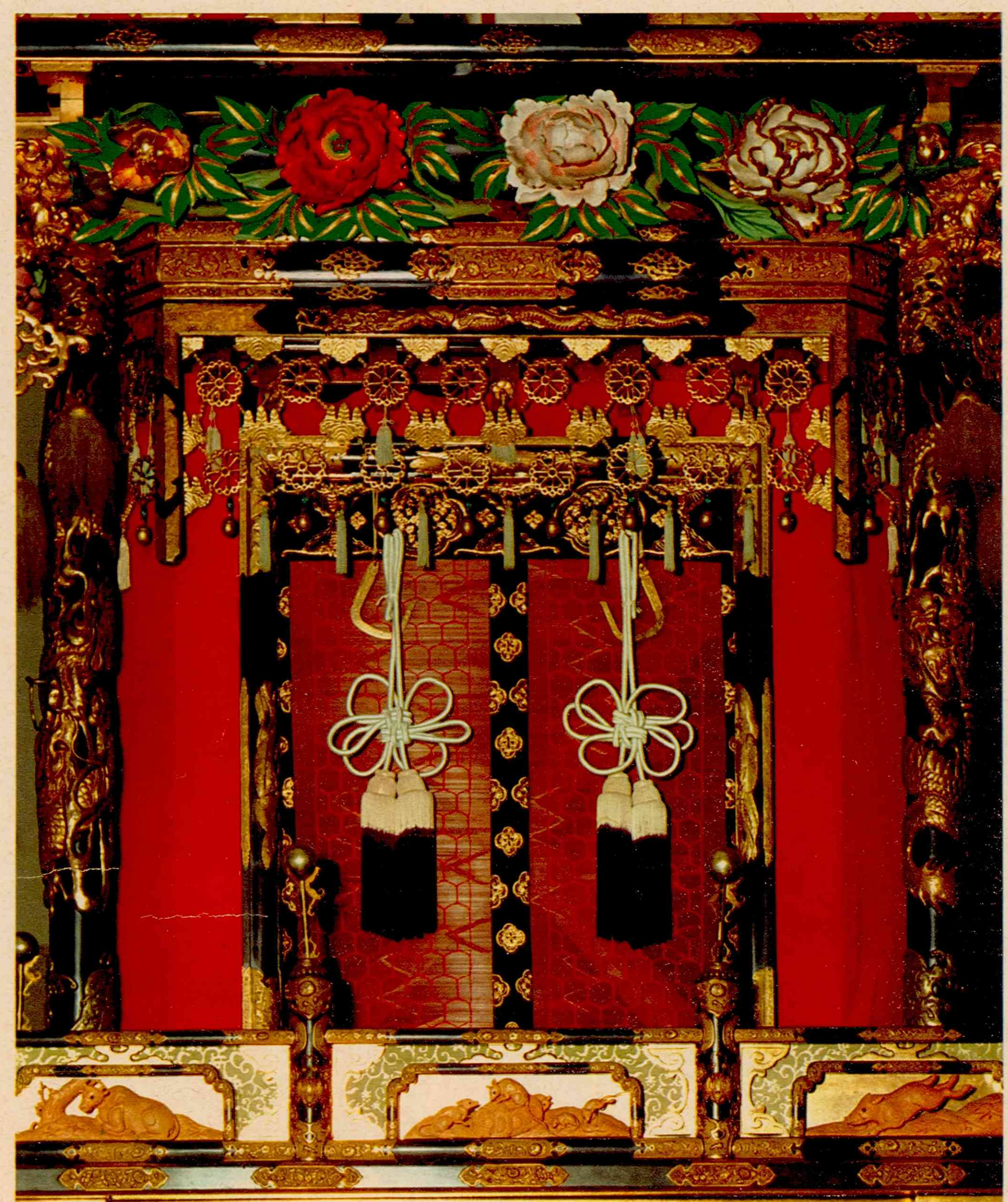




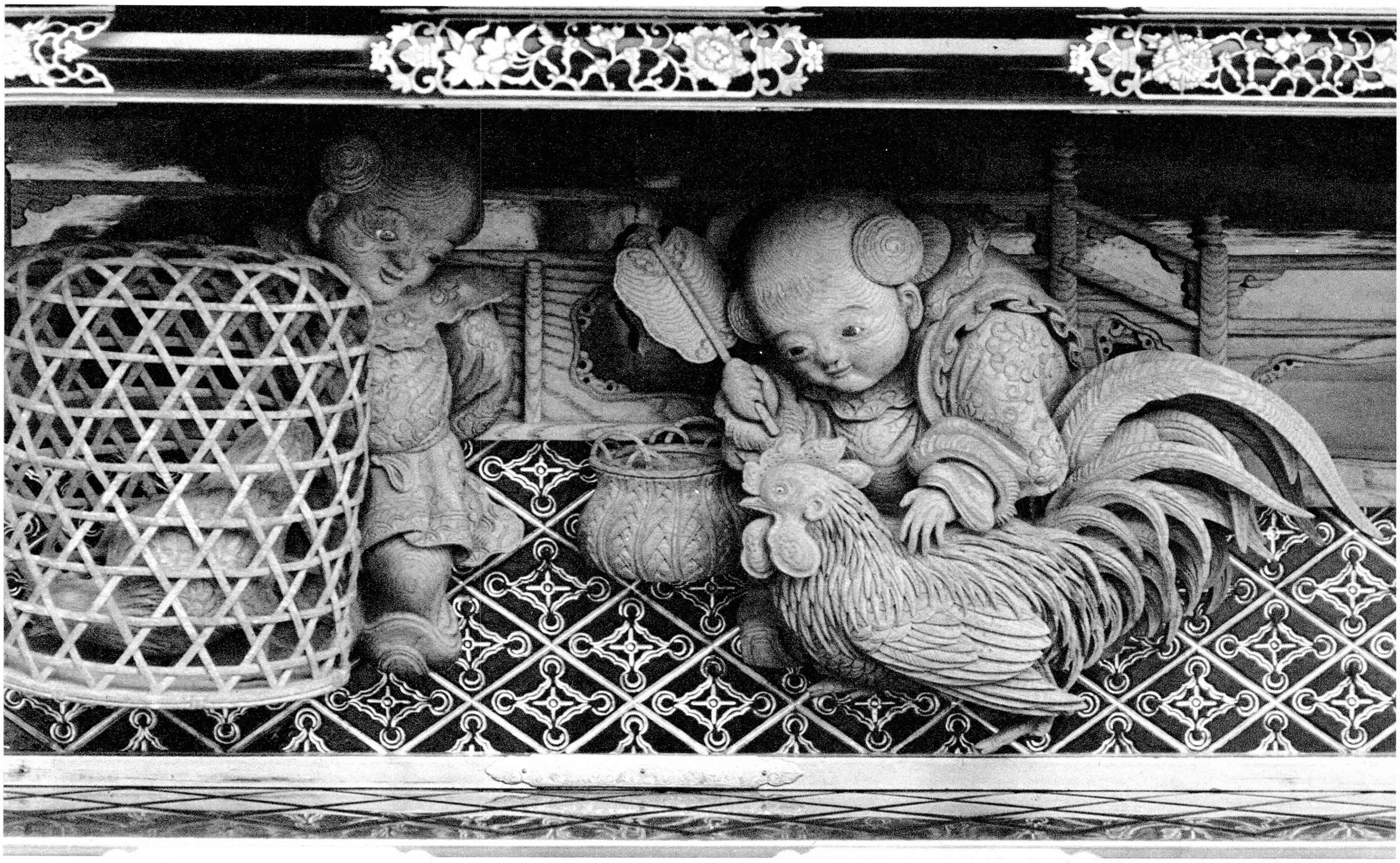
A Takayama sculptor at work in his studio



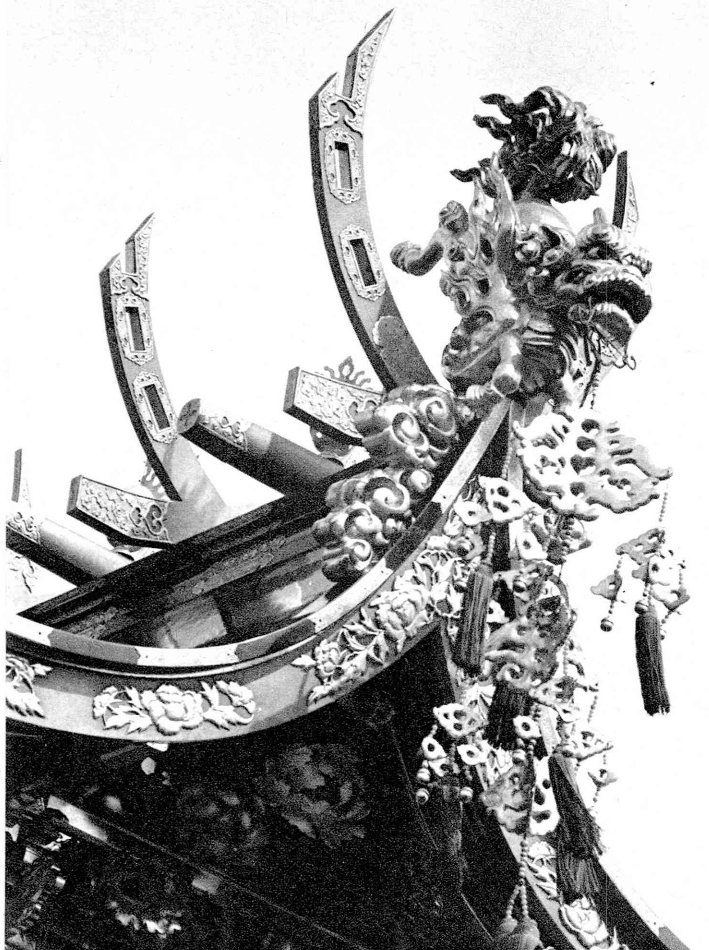




Above: Ebisu-tai Float, decorated with exotic carvings, is one of the most elaborate festival carriages of Takayama. Top right: The exquisite carvings of the Homei-tai Float. Right: Front view of Homei-tai Float with various ornate decorations.



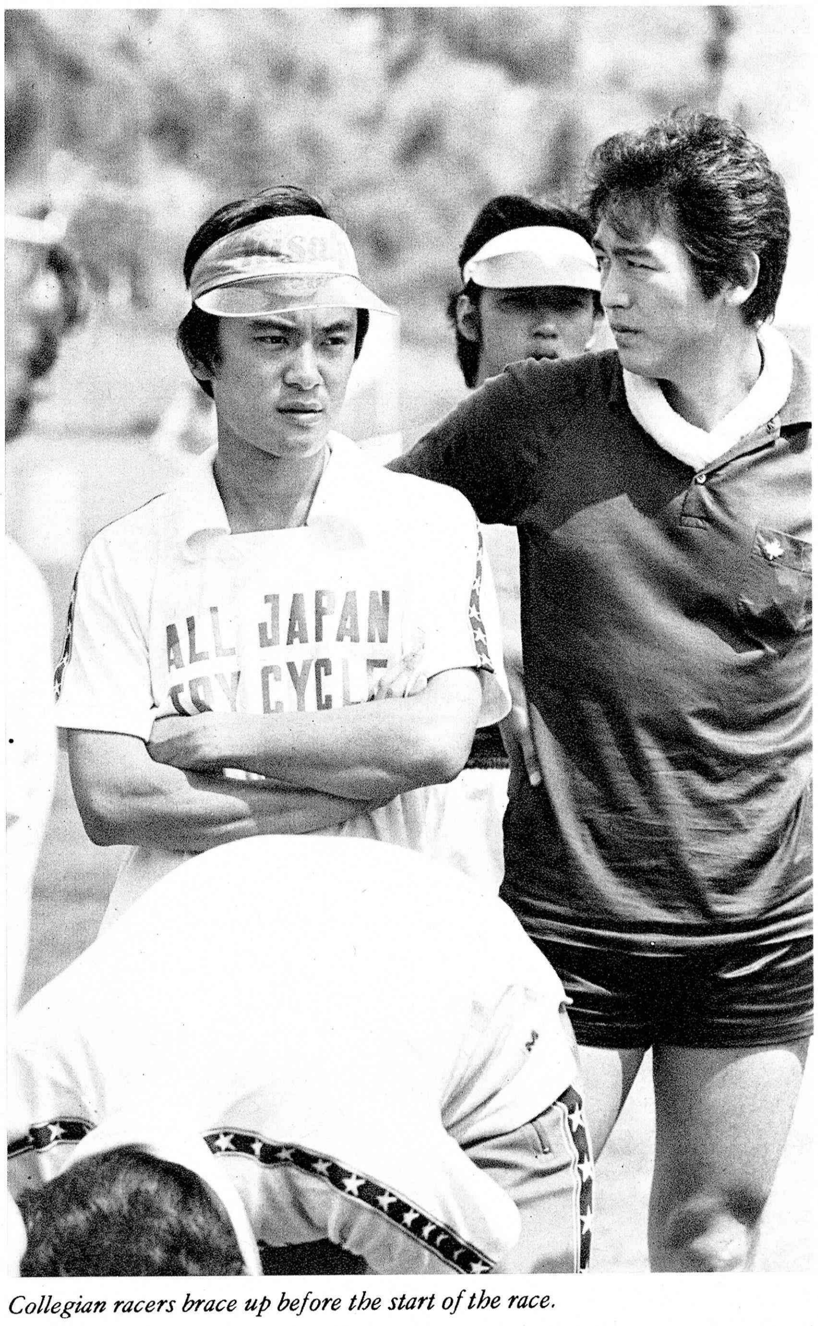
This intricate piece of sculpture forms a part of the decoration on the Kirin-tai Float. The cage and the chicken inside are carved out of a single piece of wood.



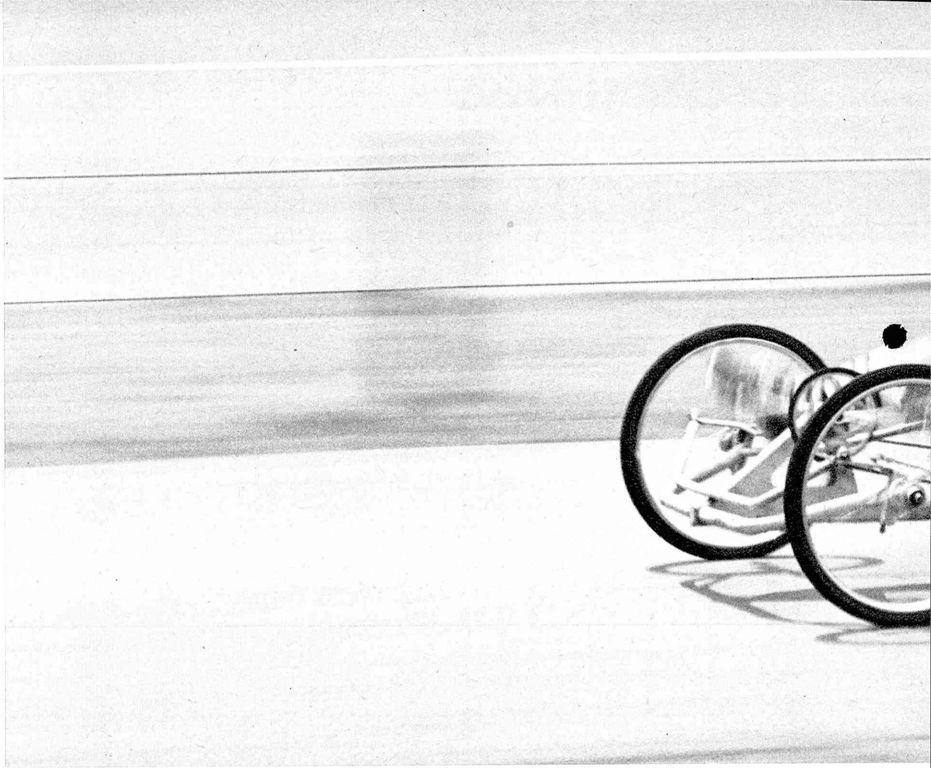


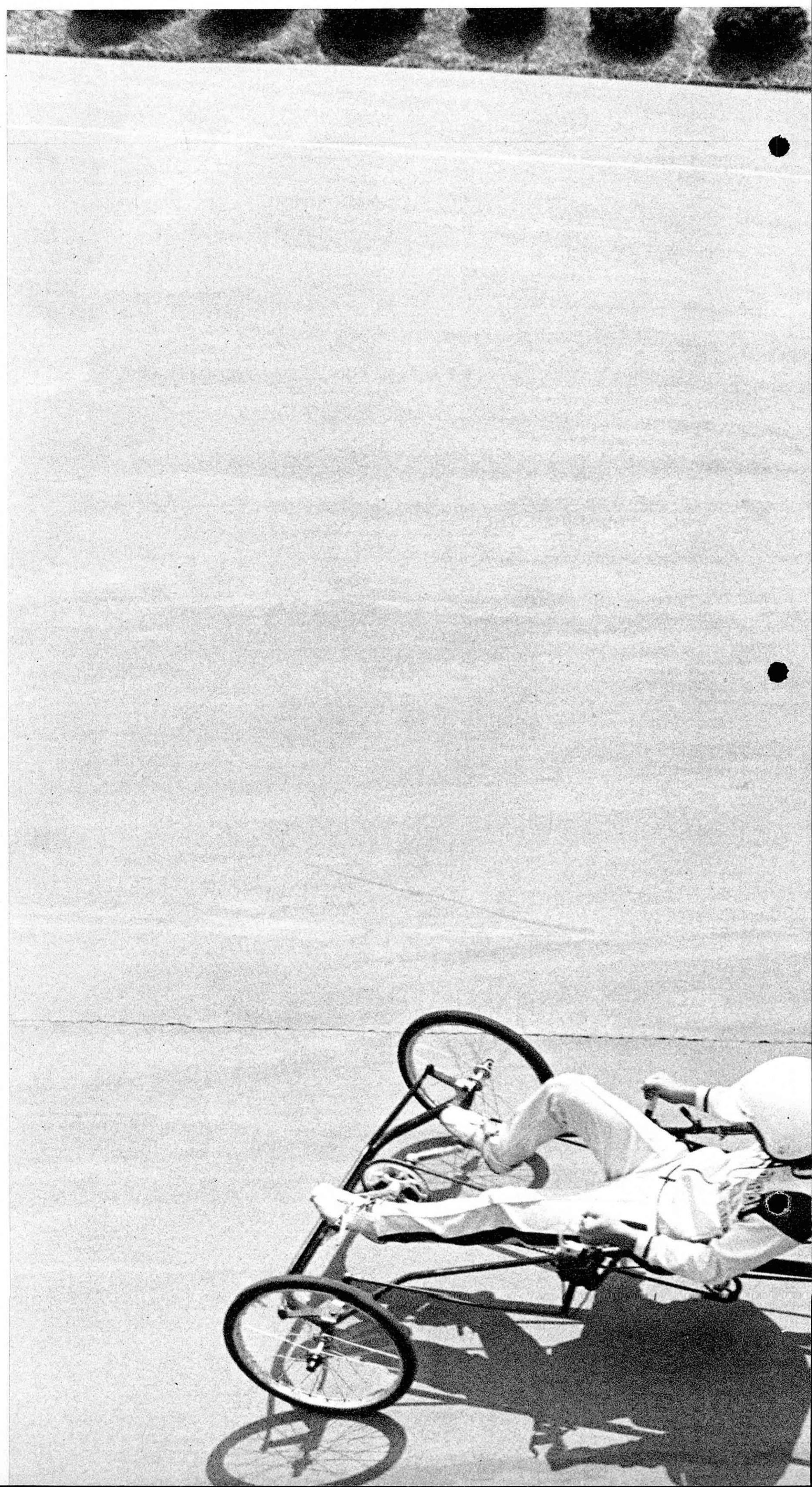
Above: Some of Takayama's two dozen festival floats ready for the big pageant. Left: Elaborately decorated roof of the Kirin-tai Float

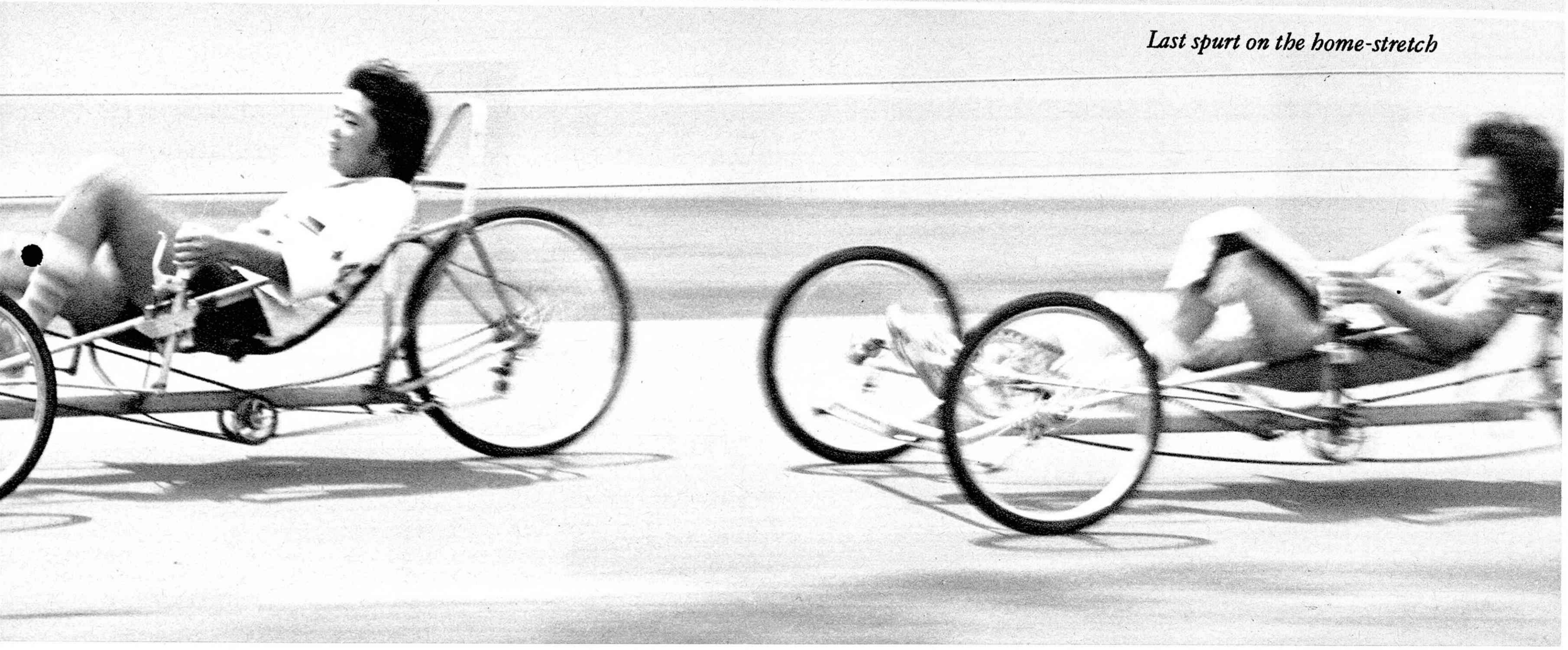
Tricycle Race Becoming a New Fad



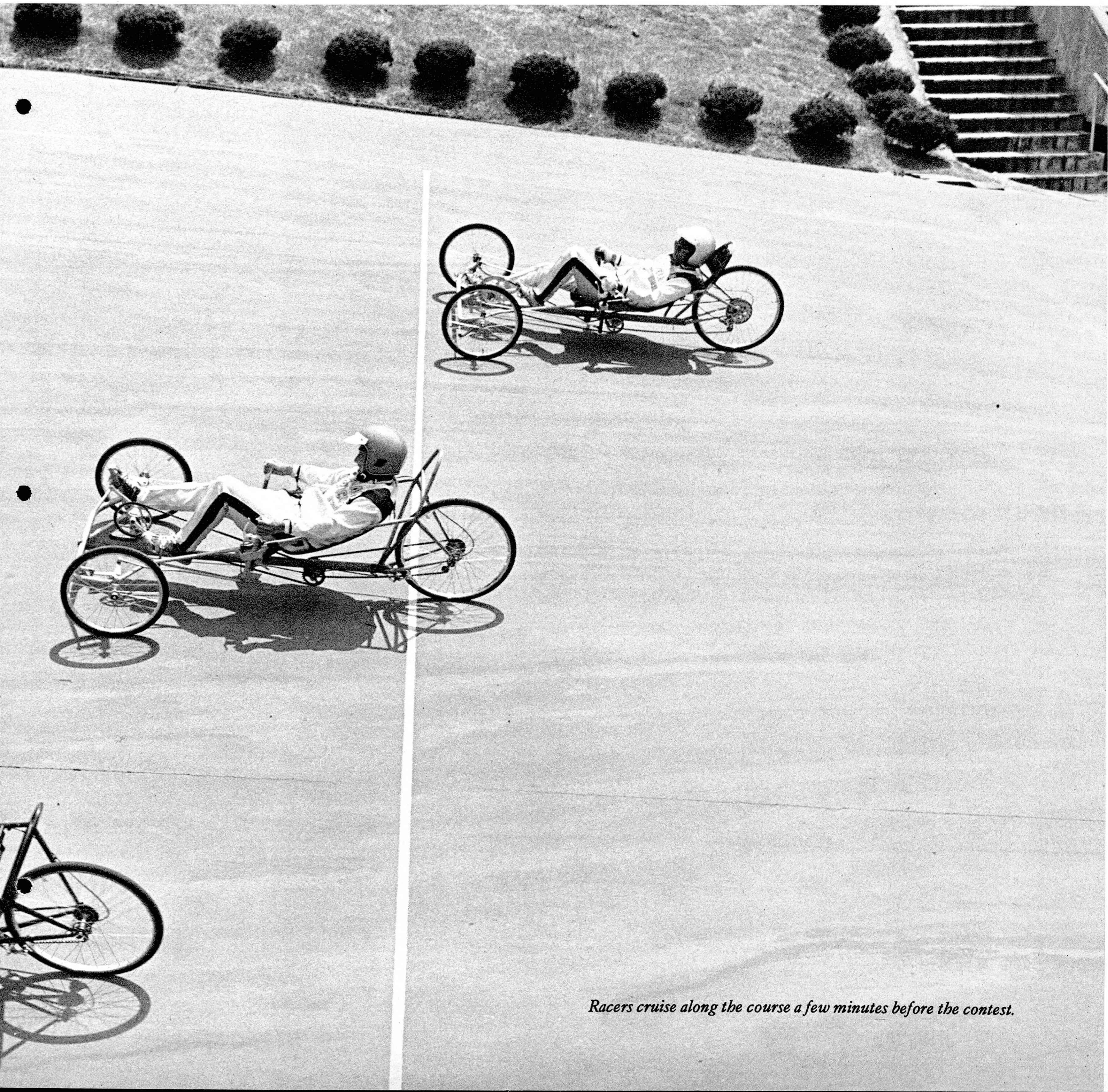
Collegian racers brace up before the start of the race.







Last spurt on the home-stretch



Racers cruise along the course a few minutes before the contest.

A NEW style tricycle which shatters all conceptions of conventional man-powered vehicles is fast gaining popularity in Japan.

Dubbed the "TRY CYCLE," the vehicle is the rage among college and high school students because of its unusually high speed—maximum 80 kilometers an hour. It is being used as a racing car in speed races.

The "TRY CYCLE" which looks somewhat like a skeletonized mini racing car, has a very low chassis and a hammock-like seat on which the driver pedals the vehicle lying on his back. Another feature of the car is that it is driven with the same techniques as those required for a racing car.

With its body made of steel tubes, the tricycle is 2.3 meters long, 1.2 meters wide and 0.7 meter high. It weighs only 25 kilograms. The car has five speeds and is equipped with disc brakes which are applied to the rear wheel.

Six years ago, a college student majoring in aeronautical dynamics hit on the idea of producing a tricycle patterned after a man-powered airplane. He produced the first prototype with the help of a bicycle dealer three years after he had drawn his first blueprint. Riding on the crest of the cycling boom then in progress, the TRY CYCLE gained huge popularity among cyclists in a matter of several months. In June last year, several enthusiasts formed the Nippon TRY CYCLE Sport Association and started a campaign to recruit members. The association promised to sponsor four TRY CYCLE races a year, one of which would be an All-Japan Grand Prix.

The campaign has proved quite successful. By now, 600 members, including 100 women, have obtained licenses to participate in the races. Aside from these qualified racers, there are about 5,000 members. Officials of the association are confident that the TRY CYCLE will gain more popularity in the future and that membership will increase accordingly.

In the United States, a similar association has been formed by Mr. David Hall, former governor of Oklahoma. Mr. Hall visited Japan in September and made arrangements with the local association for collaboration to improve the car and develop a new model. The agreement also provides for holding a Japan-U.S. Grand Prix in the future.

The Japanese association will be reorganized into a juridical foundation next April. Officials and members of the association hope to see tricycle racing adopted as an Olympic event in the future.

The TRY CYCLE model for adults now in use is priced at ¥120,000. Work is under way to make models for children. The association has concluded a gentleman's agreement with the Metropolitan Police Department to prohibit its members from driving the vehicle on public roads. *(M.I.)*





Top: Racers stymied with mechanical trouble
Above: Racer being pulled over into the pit





Above: Cyclists train hard at the Shuzenji Cycle Sports Center in Shizuoka Prefecture preparing for the All Japan Grand Prix in Tokyo. Left: Getting set for a start

Photos by Japan Illustrated

The image of Amitabha Tathagata in the center is typical of "magaibutsu" carved almost in the round. Its lower half has largely crumbled, but the head still retains a stern but graceful expression.



Rock Buddhas of Usuki

Some images at Usuki are protected with roofs or other covers from the corrosive action of the elements. Such covers harmonize attractively with the surrounding landscape.





Photos by Atsushi Kayada

BUDDHIST statues are very important symbols of Buddhism for the Japanese people so much so that the mention of Buddhism invariably evokes Buddhist images in their minds.

The materials used for carving or casting Buddhist statues include bronze, wood, clay, lacquer and stone. Stone Buddhist images come in two varieties — those portable and those carved in mountain rock walls.

The latter are called *magaibutsu.* The largest cluster of carvings of this type is located in the Usuki district of Oita Prefecture in Kyushu. This cluster is the most important of Japan's stone Buddhist images in point of scale, number of the units and sculptural quality. Some of the statues date as far back as the Heian Period (794-1192 A.D.).

While there is no way of knowing exactly what historical background existed behind the carving of these rock statues, it is believed that some devout followers of Buddhism carved them as an expression of their religious devotion. Some of the images still vividly retain the original details, while others are damaged due to exfoliation and other causes. However, all of them evoke a pious religious sentiment in the minds of visitors and enchant them with their artistic beauty.

Rock carvings may be classified into two categories by the carving methods employed — namely, those simply carved in relief on the face of the rock and those carved in caves dug into the rock wall. Moreover, the images themselves may be divided into those in high relief, those in low relief and those carved almost in the round.

These three types of images are all found in Usuki. In particular, the stone images there include many almost in the round, which number 60. The Usuki district is the only place in Japan where a large cluster of *magaibutsu* carved nearly in the round is found.

Moreover, the Usuki statues hold high esthetic value. From the refined carving techniques used, it is presumed that they are the works of first-rate sculptors from Kyoto, then the capital of Japan, or at least were carved under their guidance. It is also supposed that the images were made not by sculptors specializing in stone carving but by wood carvers. For instance, the method of carving nearly in the round to express solid beauty and the apparent use of sculptural method peculiar to wood-carving would seem to give credence to the theory that advanced wood-carving skills were employed for the Usuki cluster.

Regrettably, however, these images are seriously damaged partly because they are carved on fragile tuff. In recent years, intense efforts have been made to preserve the Usuki rock statues by repairing damaged images and building eave-like covers to protect them from the corrosive action of the rain.

Needless to say, stone Buddhist images originated in the ancient cave temples of India and China. The practice of carving stone Buddhas was then introduced into Japan around the seventh century and the expertise flowered into the Usuki rock carvings between the 11th and the 13th century — a period known as the golden age of religious stone sculpturing in Japan.

Apart from this Buddhist art, however, Japan also had a unique tradition of stone carving stemming from the Shinto spirit of nature worship. Ancient Japanese believed that a mystic spiritual power existed in stones themselves and worshipped carved stones as icons. This indigenous tradition among the masses mixed with the imported Buddhist stone art to create a type of lithic art peculiar to Japan. *(W.B.)*



Above: The fallen head of Dainichi Buddha, 66 cm. in height. Exposed to the elements for nearly a century, the torso of the image has already crumbled and only the head section now remains. Right: The image at the center, 175 cm. tall, is Amitabha Tathagata, another statue carved almost in the round. In relief behind is a halo symbolizing Buddhist dignity. The image shows a skillful application of wood-carving techniques.



Below: A cluster of 11 Buddhist images carved in a semicircular depression hewn into the rock face. The image at the center is Jizo (guardian deity of children), who is most familiar to the Japanese people among various kinds of stone Buddhist statues. It is marked by a gentle, lovable expression.





Left: A stone image of Nio (guardian god) protecting the cluster of Buddhist images at Usuki. It is marked by the head with a somewhat humorous expression on a masculine, brawny body. Among the stone images at Usuki, it stands out because of its rather human mood.

Paper Doll Wrestling

Photos by Japan Illustrated

ALTHOUGH millions of Japanese avidly watch *sumo* wrestling bouts on the television screen during the six annual tournaments staged in various parts of the country, relatively few know of *kami sumo* — a miniature version of the Japanese national sport played with paper dolls made in the shape of wrestlers.

The game, however, is not of recent origin. It has been played for some 20 years but lately it has gained sudden popularity among aficionados from ages 5 to 80.

While real *sumo* is staged on a ring with a diameter of 4.55 meters (16 feet), its paper version is played on a round piece of drawing paper 12 cm. (about 5 inches) in diameter, with sandpaper pasted on it. A folding paper spring is affixed under the ring.

On this ring, the bout is played by wrestler-like paper dolls standing 5.8 to 6.3 cm. (about 2 inches). After the two wrestlers are placed in a fighting position at the center of the ring, a tapper, preferably in a neutral position, sits in front of the ring and taps lightly but steadily with the index and middle fingers of both hands on the edges of the platform on either side until either of the contestants wins the game by executing one of a dozen different techniques — arm throw, push out, twist-down, etc.

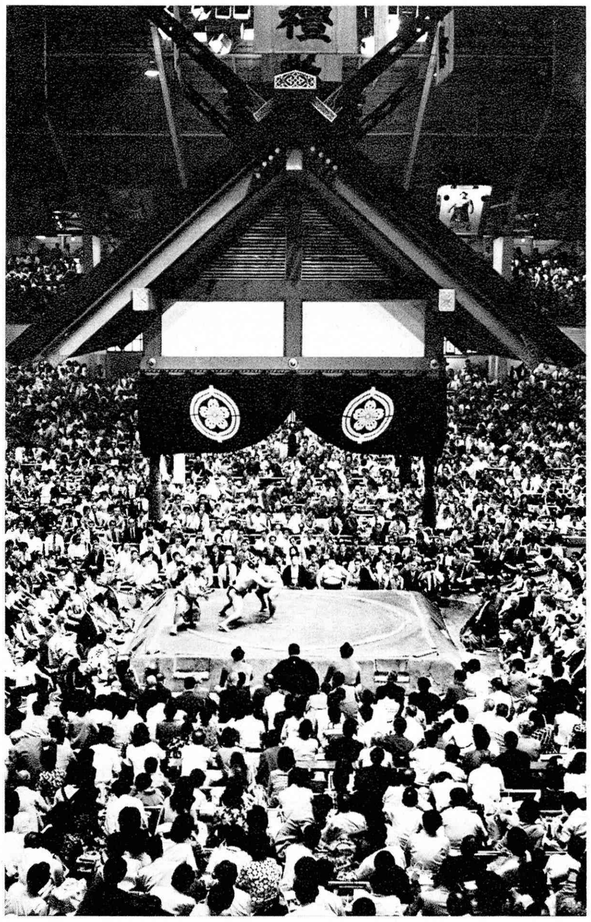
Kami sumo is a simple game which can be played even by children. But it is characteristic in that everything is done strictly according to the old, traditional procedures of *sumo.* That is why *kami sumo* has gained in popularity as adults' game as well.

The paper ring is placed in a miniature model of a traditional structure in which the real *sumo* is staged. Moreover, the paper wrestler's entry and exit are made in accordance with time-honored rituals. Thus the game is an exact replica of the real *sumo* in every detail.

While physical prowess and skill count in the real *sumo,* chance plays a decisive part in its paper version. And this explains its great popularity as a game suitable both for adults and children.

The current *kami sumo* boom has been touched off by Yoshiyuki Tokugawa, a 38-year-old tea shop operator in Tokyo. A sumo enthusiast from childhood, he once seriously aspired to a wrestler's career but eventually gave up because of his small build.

In 1954, when he was only a first-year student at a senior high school, he established the Japan Paper Sumo Wrestling Association and has since devoted himself to the promotion of the game as executive director of the association.



The National Sumo Stadium at Kuramae, Tokyo, where 15-day tournaments are held three times a year — in January, May and September

His organization has 5,000 members including people in all walks of life ranging from primary school children to bankers, PR men, designers and housewives, who share an enthusiasm for *kami sumo.* In recent times, the unique game has come to attract popular attention not only in Japan but also in such remote areas as Brazil and Hawaii.

Last summer, Tokugawa visited Hawaii and introduced *kami sumo* as a new pastime. Meanwhile, the association recently published an English-language booklet explaining how to make *kami sumo* ring and wrestler dolls and how to play the game. The 38-page publication, titled "Paper Sumo Wrestling: Cut and Play," includes paper cutouts of 24 wrestlers, two judges, the ring, sandpaper for its surface and other *sumo* paraphernalia. *(T.M.)*



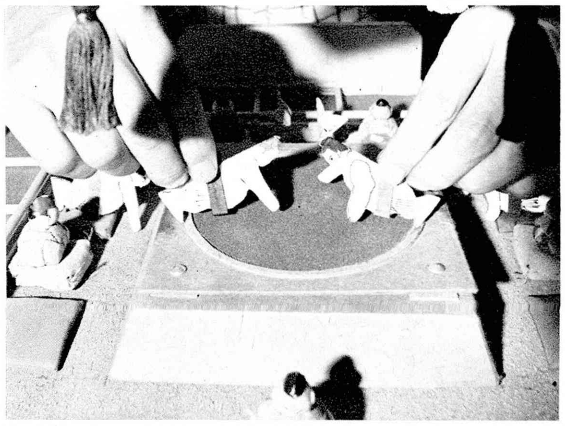


Above: The newly published English-language booklet. Right: Results of the games are recorded on this table. Wins are recorded with white circles and losses as black circles, and a "rikishi," who has won the largest number of white circles, is pronounced the winner.

How "Kami-Sumo" Is Played

Left to right: (1) A "yobidashi" (ring announcer) enters the "dohyo" (ring) and introduces the two "rikishi" before the start of a match. (2) The wrestlers bow to each other and (3) are placed in fighting positions. (4) The match starts as the referee begins tapping the ring with finger tips. (5) The heated match ends several seconds after.

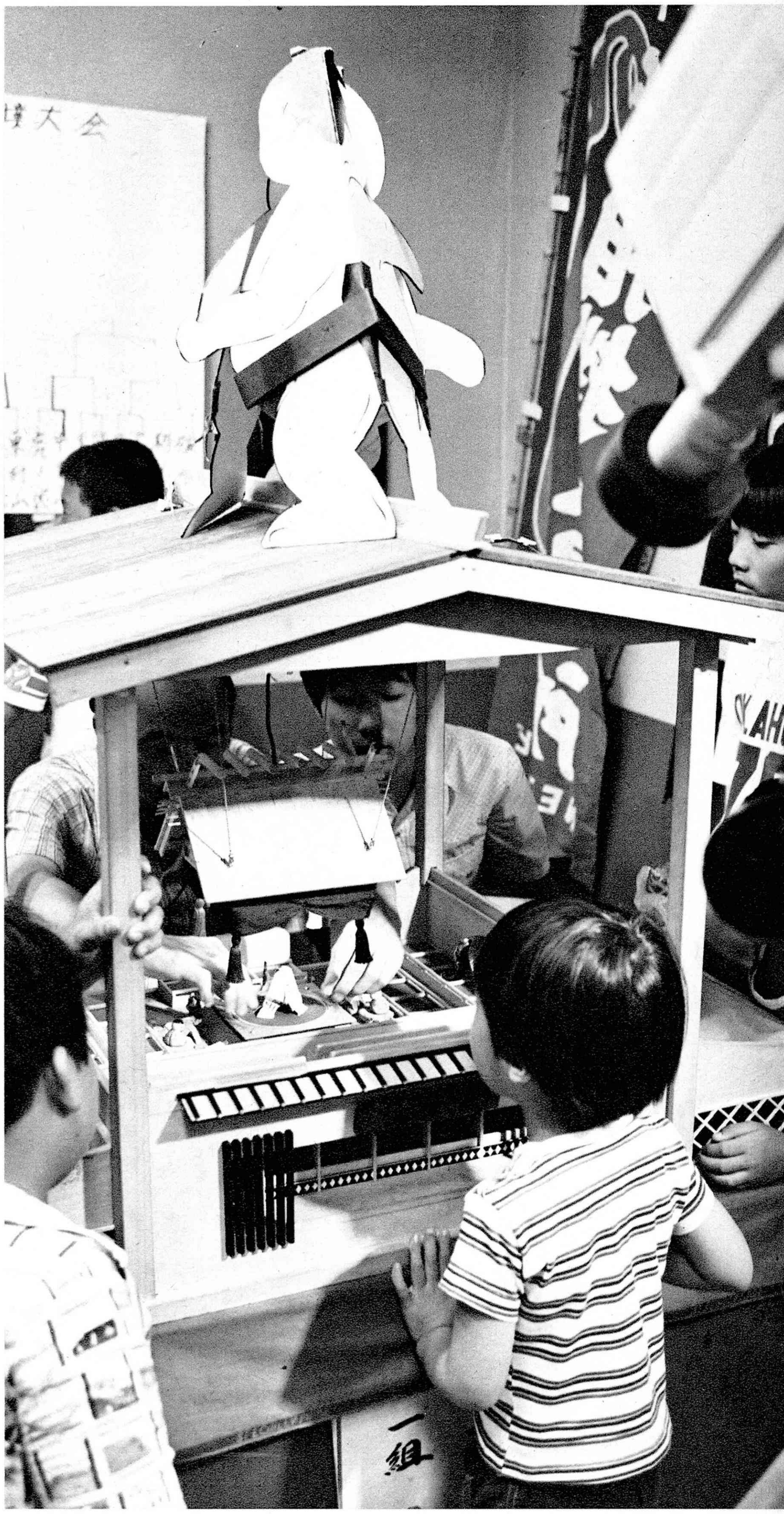


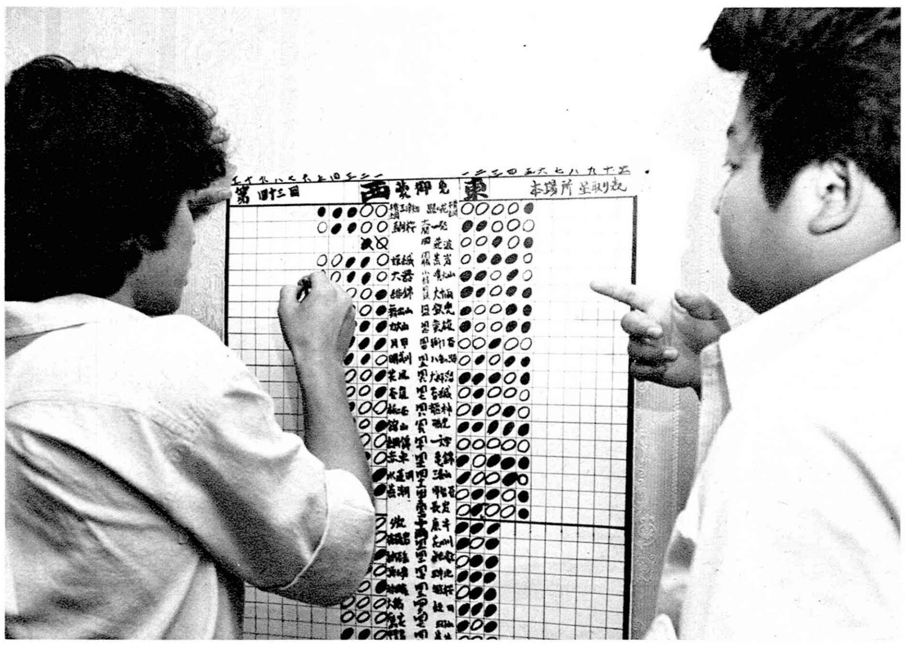


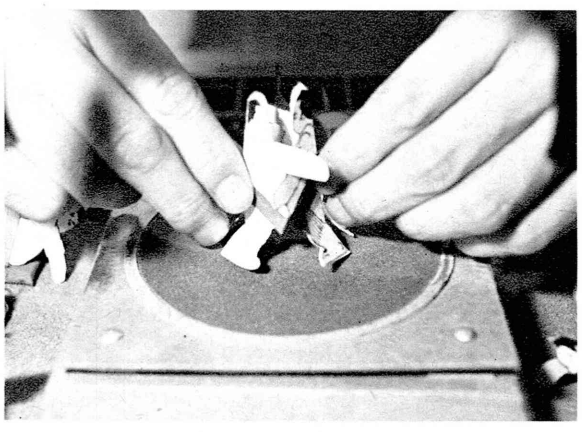
Below: Every weekend, paper sumo lovers get together at the headquarters of the association, bringing their paper "rikishi" (wrestlers) with them for a series of heated matches.

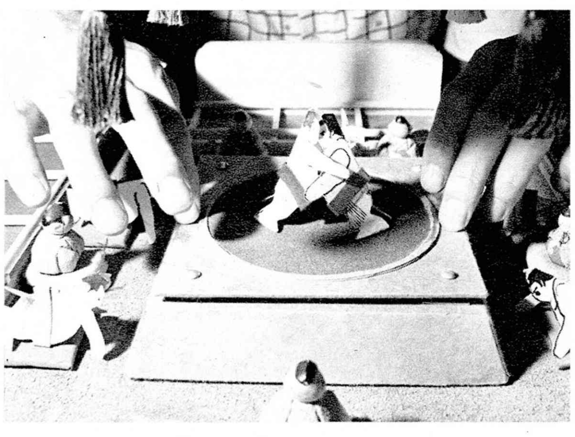
Below: Paper sumo wrestling is sponsored periodically by department stores. Children make paper wrestlers, give them names of their choice and pit them against each other. The matches are shown throughout the store via closed TV circuit.

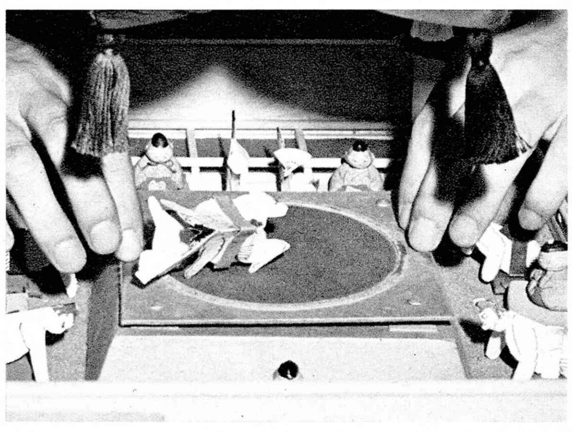














Japanese Movies Today—a Sad Story

By Donald Richie

Donald Richie, a foremost authority of Japanese cinema, served as Curator of Films at the New York Museum of Art from 1968 to 1973. He is the author of "Films of Akira Kurosawa," "Yasujiro Ozu," "The Inland Sea" and other books.

BETWEEN 1945 and 1960 cinema was a major entertainment in Japan. There were six major companies making some 500 films a year; over five thousand theaters were devoted exclusively to Japanese film, and each picture was seen by millions. Now, just fifteen years later, there are three major companies producing about 150 films a year; there are only a thousand or so Japanese-film theaters, and the audience is not even a tenth of what it was.

Until around 1960 Japanese films usually made money. Now — with exceptions — they lose money. Then, the rich companies could afford to make an occasional quality film designed only to recoup its costs. Now no company could afford such a product. Each film is designed to make money. That few do indicates the current state of the Japanese cinema.

The reason for the financial decline are various and familiar. With the advent of home television, the coming of family automobile, and the new availability of leisure time, Japan, as did most countries, turned away from cinema. The majority audience left, though a minority audience remained.

As in other countries, the first reaction of the industry was to win back this majority audience. Hence an emphasis on screens of various sizes, several 3-D experiments, films in which numbers of popular stars were combined, remakes of formerly popular films, etc. In Japan, as in other countries, such remedies failed to win back the missing audience. It was gone for good.

Here, however, the Japanese pattern varies from that of the United States, or England, or Europe. There, the major companies, one after another, either adjusted to the situation by becoming distribution companies or diversified into other kinds of entertainment, or else they failed. In Japan the major companies were not allowed to fail — though three of them did. Rather, they were encouraged to continue somehow.

This was possible because the three remaining majors are well entrenched as entertainment combines: Toho, Shochiku and Toei own much more than film studios. At the same time, the government, anxious that all big businesses survive, provides funds in various ways — one of them being a sum (ten million yen a picture) awarded to the makers of "worthwhile" pictures made during a given year.

While this was occurring another change damaging to film as an industry took place. All over the world costs rose. It now costs up to ten times as much to make a major film as it did in 1960. To be sure, ticket prices rose accordingly. In 1960 the average price was 100 yen, now the average price is 1,000 yen. Ticket revenue alone, however, could not support an industry the buyers for the products of which had been decimated.

An obvious answer, and one discovered in many countries, was the abandoning (and consequent leasing to television) of the large studios, the overhead of which alone is one of the major costs in traditional film production. But here too Japan was different. The remaining major companies have all attempted to keep their studios, at least in Tokyo — though most have been forced to sell or lease their Kyoto studios. These mighty film factories, an economic anachronism, are still kept open and still, to an extent, function.

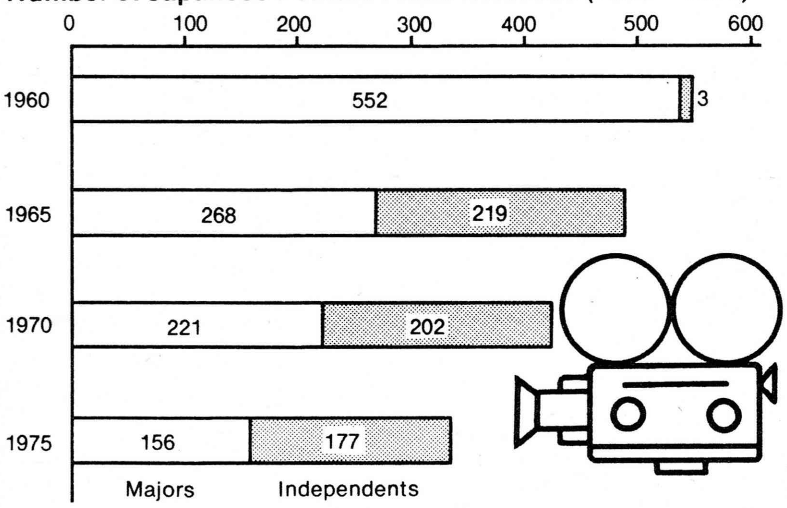
Given the economic background, the reasons for the decline in the quality of the Japanese film is easier to understand. Essentially, when most films made money, the companies would allow Mizoguchi, Ozu, Naruse, Kurosawa, Ichikawa, among many other directors, to make the kinds of film they best knew how to and, in general, the films they wanted to make. This, as in any product, as in any art, resulted in superior films. Though the industry as such has always, in all countries, interfered with their own directors, nonetheless, honest and relevant films were made.

NOW, fifteen years later, the scene is quite different. Almost all serious directors have now left the industry. One may return from time to time but as both Ichikawa and Shinoda discovered last year, he will not be allowed his freedom. The producers, the ones responsible for both the payroll and the board of directors, now completely control the content and the production of the films themselves.

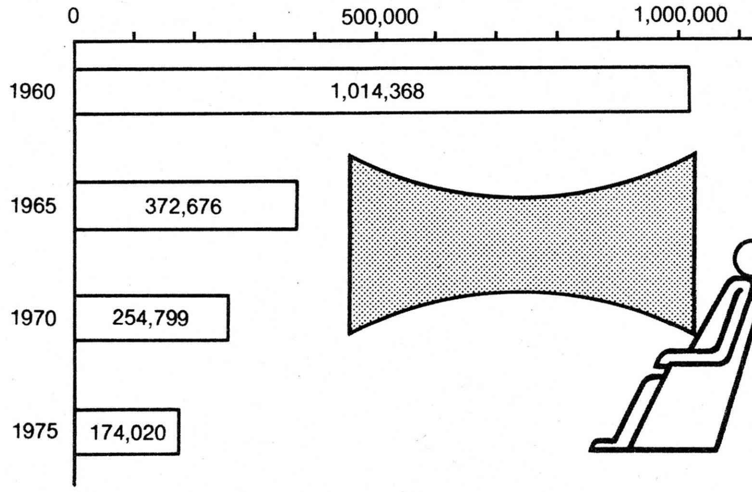
Those directors and screen writers who remain with the three majors are now largely (but with notable exceptions) company hacks, that is, men who have a job and who go about doing it, men to whom compromise with the company is merely a way of keeping a job. It is they who turn out what the producer dictates.

His dictation is based entirely upon his assumptions of what will bring in an audience. Thus occur a number of anomalies. Films for the teen-ager are made by men in their sixties because the company has few younger men whom they will elevate to responsible positions; or, the big hit of 1959 is made over again regardless of the fact that the original audience for this film has long ceased going to the movies. In their efforts to sell, they appeal to some mythical lowest common

Number of Japanese Feature Films Released (1960—1975)



Number of Attendants (1960—1975) In million persons



Data provided by the Association for the Diffusion of Japanese Films Abroad, Inc. (UNIJAPANFILM)

denominator, but these, if they exist, are naturally all at the television tube, a device which is much better designed to satisfy them. In their attempt to please everyone they naturally fail to please anyone.

There are exceptions. Until recently Toei's bread and butter, the *yakuza* films, could be assured of an audience; Toho's picturization of Japan sinking or aliens from outer space appearing would attract viewers; Shochiku is kept solvent, to the extent that it is, by one kind of picture alone — Yoji Yamada's series of Tora-san comedy-films.

All of this is familiar and is reminiscent of the vicissitudes suffered by all the major film industries in the world. There, however, natural change was allowed — with the result that cinema in Europe and America has now taken on a new relevance and a new honesty and is assured of a respectable minority audience.

The way in which this was done is well-known. With the collapse of the major companies, independent production became common. A writer and/or director with a script they truly wanted to make somehow gathered together the money and arranged a distribution contract with one of the remaining majors. The once powerful companies had now largely become distribution houses; they would put the film in their theaters for a percentage of the product.

Since the independent films did not need the paraphernalia of a large studio production, were, indeed, often shot against real surroundings, and did not need the economic luxury of a big-name star, they could be made for much less than a studio production would cost. Consequently, even with a numerically small audience, such films were economically feasible. Most films in Europe and America are now made in this manner. They do not belong to the company advertising them; they are merely distributed by this company.

The foreign independent film, naturally, does not have to cater to the whims and prejudices of a majority audience. The minority audience, to be sure, has its own whims and prejudices, but they are, at least, somewhat different and the foreign film-maker is free to be more honest and more intelligent and more daring than he ever was before. He must show a profit but he is at least usually free of a producer who has set ideas on what people in general want to see.

IN Japan, however, such a logical and beneficial solution was not possible.

For one thing there was the matter of the theaters. Japan has no anti-cartel laws in this regard which means that the three majors own almost all of the theaters. They are naturally interested in showing only their own production. In addition, these major companies are tied into a weekly-changed double-bill program. This means that to keep the theaters filled, each company must make 104 films a year. Though this was once possible, it no longer is. In 1975, all three together only made 156.

Paradoxically, this originally gave independent production its impetus in Japan. A major company would discover that a coming-up double-bill slot could not be filled. The only alternative was to buy the distribution rights for an independent picture and run it as one of their own. Thus it was that films of Shinoda and Hani and Imai and Shindo would suddenly turn up on the bottom-half of a major's double-bill. This state of affairs allowed a number of serious film-makers to continue working.

The only difficulty was that the majors charged very high distribution rates and there was always the problem for a small independent company of gathering the funds necessary to make a film. Banks, the major source of film investment in America and Europe, would not cooperate because in Japan banks do not openly gamble.

THINGS looked better for cinema a decade ago when a new company, the Art Theater Guild, or ATG was formed. It was a distribution company which bought up a number of theaters and charged reasonable distribution rates and, in addition, would itself invest up to half the production costs of likely looking films. It was not interested in the lost majority audience. Like similar companies abroad, it saw that a profit could be made with a small audience and quality films. So, for the past ten years any good Japanese film was made by, with, or for ATG.

Last year, however, it became inactive. The reasons are various and as yet little understood. One of the three major companies was its sponsor and it is said that the ATG books did not show the kind of profit a major company is expected to receive. The attitude is somewhat like that of Musashi Shimizu, president of Toho, who said (Nihon Keizai Shimbun, Oct. 4, 1974): "I really don't know anything about films . . . but I know the situation very well if I look at the figures. If (a film) results in a loss, it should not have been made. It is a sign of a lack of talent."

One would imagine that President Shimizu is monthly confronted with a massive lack of talent in that most Japanese films do not make the kind of profit he is hoping for. His remarks, however, should perhaps be interpreted, rather, as an indication of his ideas on how a healthy business should run itself.

Thus, in Japan, necessary and needed changes in the structure of film production are too radical to be anything but firmly resisted. It is for this reason that anachronistic production methods and shoddy product are both tolerated and encouraged. In fact, until the major companies realease their hold on film distribution, Japan cannot experience the cinema renaissance which is occurring in other countries.

The resistance and reluctance of the major companies remains extreme and the power of the producer and the head office retains its strength. Even independent production is largely at the mercy of these producers now for they, not content to distribute films already made, farm out approved scripts to struggling independent companies anxious, above all, to survive.

At the same time, however, there are signs that the economy of the film industry, so hopelessly cantilevered, is beginning, finally, to crack. Shochiku is contemplating a cut-back in production. Toho and Toei may well follow this lead. Such an act will throw theaters open and the brutalized independent production may, if it has enough strength and funds, be able to take advantage of this opening to finally bring about this long and much needed revolution in Japanese film economy.



Photos by Toru Mizuno

Summer Haven for City Kids

By Masayuki Ishida

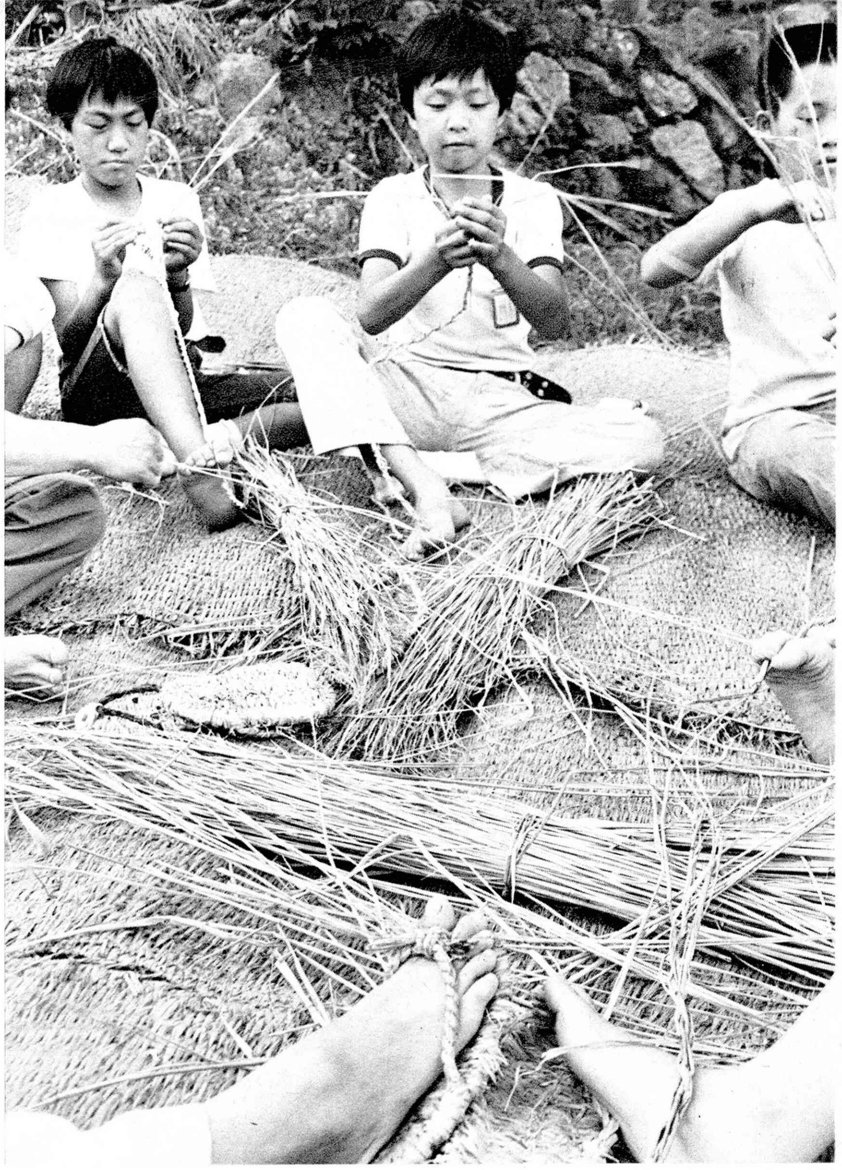
FIVE and a half hours' train and bus ride westward from Tokyo brings you to a country village called Yasaka. It is a small rural community at the foot of the rugged Northern Japan Alps.

The village consists of old houses including some straw-thatched ones. A rustic atmosphere pervades the community.

This hamlet served as a haven for scores of city-bred children last summer. There, the youngsters, mostly from Tokyo, frolicked like any country



Riding a farm tractor is a memorable experience for the youngsters.





Top: Children learn how to twist a few straws into a rope — the first step in braiding straw sandals. Above: A stone monument, with some religious meaning for the village folks, becomes an object for playing. In the background is a deserted farmhouse.

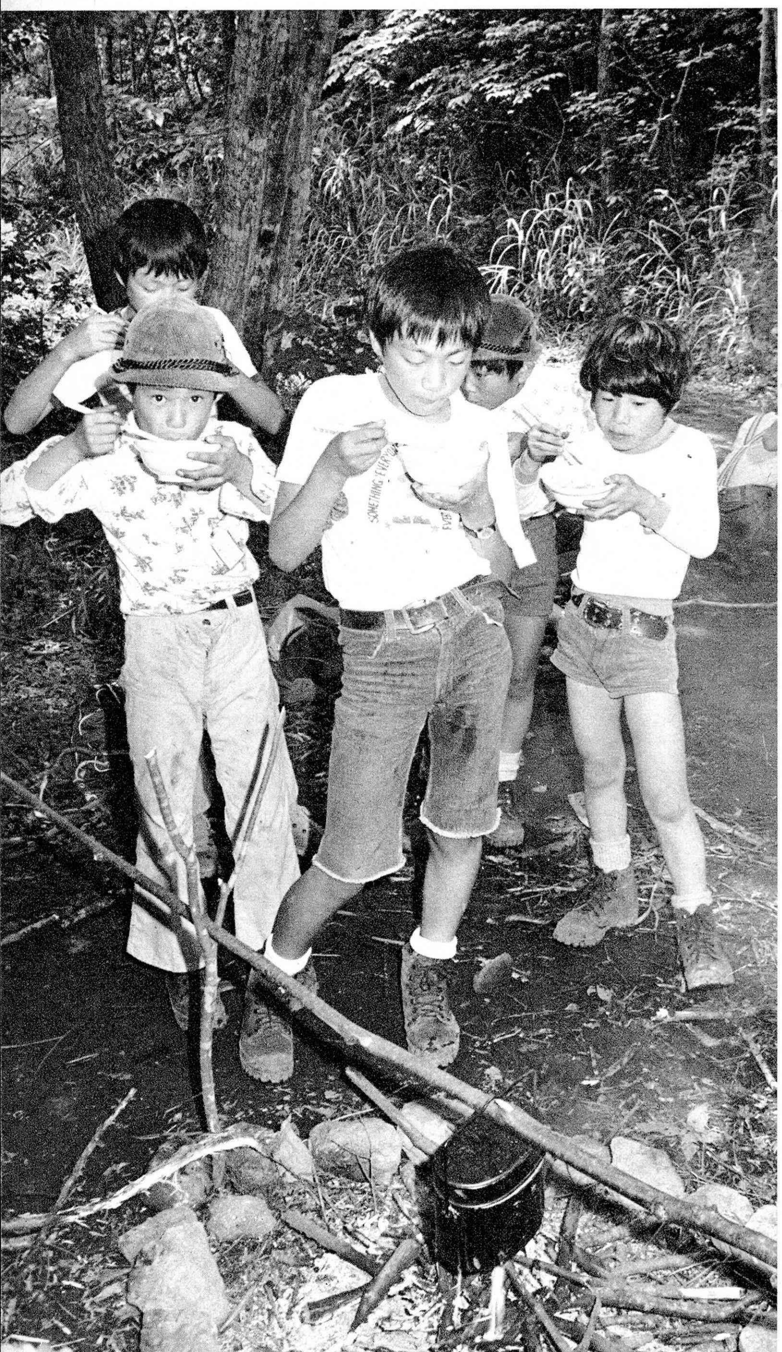
urchins, fished in a brook nearby with crude rods they had made by themselves, climbed neighborhood hills, dug up potatoes and occasionally got a lift on farmers' power cultivators. They also had a chance to hear old tales from elderly folks and learned how to braid straw sandals.

The children gained the experience under a program provided by an organization called Sodateru Kai (the Society for Bringing Up Children). This society was organized about 10 years ago by school teachers concerned about the deteriorating mental and physical health of city-bred children who are increasingly denied the opportunity to live in the bosom of nature. These teachers agreed that something must be done for the benefit of children of urban families who are often spoiled with too much parental care and excessive supervision at school. Because of this trend, they contended, contemporary school children are losing both the will and ability to think and act independently with their own minds. They are also forced to cram all the time to pass the highly competitive examinations for entrance into name schools.

The school teachers thus agreed to launch an experimental program designed to let the children play and learn freely in a rural environment at least for a week once or twice a year. Last summer's was the eighth vacation program carried out by this group at Yasaka Village.

"Our field activity program," said Takayasu Aoki, director of the society, "is aimed at giving city-bred children the opportunity, at least once a year, to live with nature and think and act freely as normal children should. I believe their experiences

The children get a big kick out of serving on the field kitchen team. The experience is entirely new to most of the kids.







here will stand them in good stead when they grow up.

"Every child," he explained, "has an innate ability to develop their personality. By giving them the opportunity to think, play and work freely in a natural environment, we can expect them to learn how to live joyfully and build up their character."

LAST summer, primary and junior high school pupils from Tokyo, Nagoya and Osaka joined the group life at Yasaka Village. They were admitted in groups of about 100 each week and altogether 500 youngsters went through the experience during the summer vacation.

During the first two days of their one-week stay, the pupils were accommodated in the Children's Field Activity Center, a three-story building complete with modern facilities built by the society at a cost of ¥200 million. There, they received an orientation training designed to acclimatize them to group life in rural surroundings. During this period, the children were encouraged to explore the village and its environs and try their hand at fishing, bamboo ware making and other activities. On the third day, they broke up into groups of about 10 and thereafter stayed at several farmhouses to live with the rural families. Each group consisted of children in different school years.

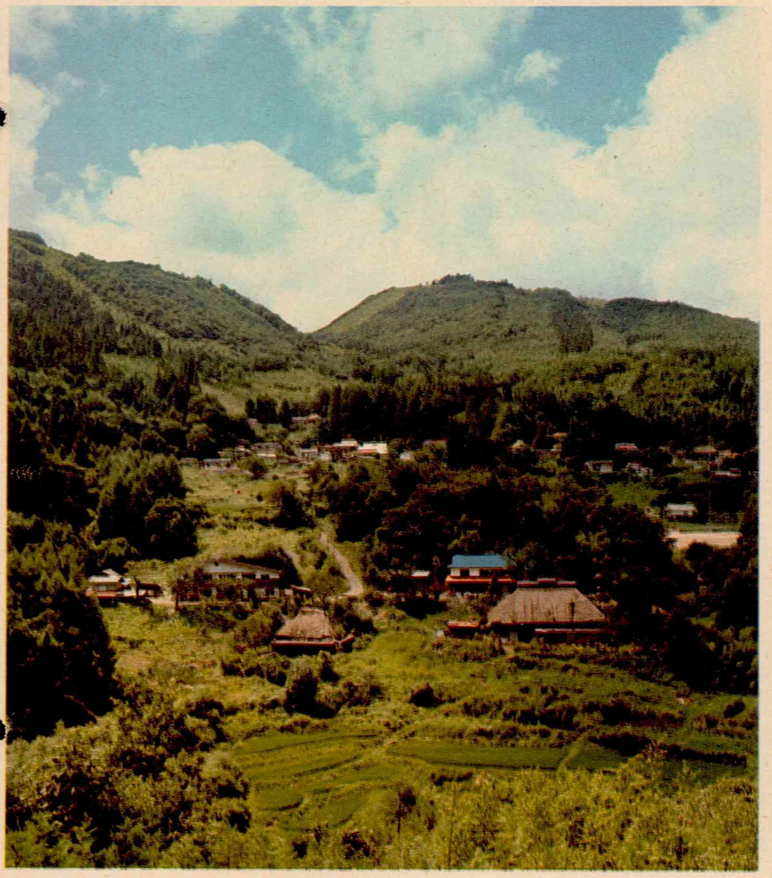
Although a schedule is prepared for each term of the training, top priority is always given to the free will on the part of the children. Instructors fix major plans but let children act on their own most of the time. Some of the youngsters quarrel among themselves but the instructors pretend to be unaware so that their charges will learn how to govern themselves.

But this does not mean that the teachers are indifferent to the welfare of the children under their

Continued on Page 30



Off they go on a trek to a nearby mountain.

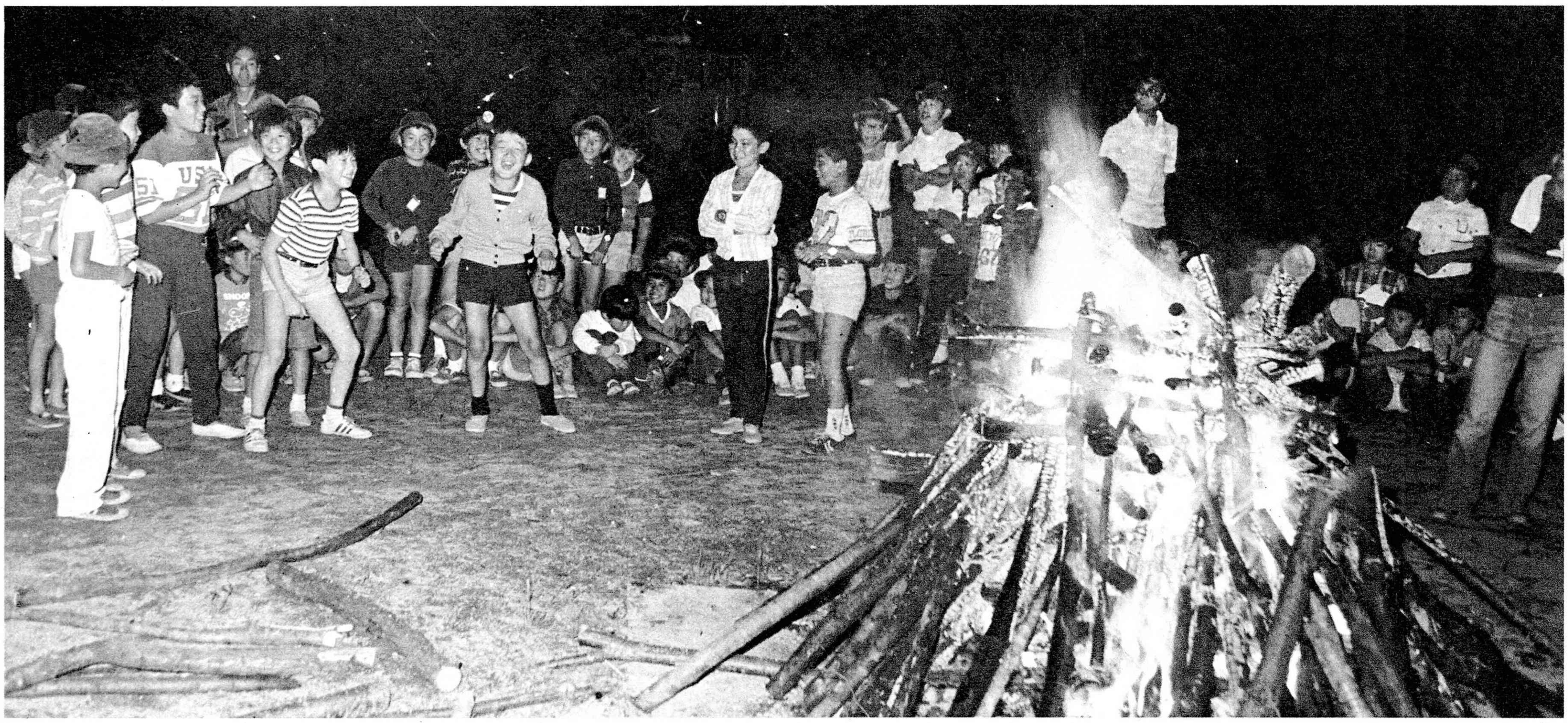


Yasaka Village, with some straw-thatched houses, provided the venue of the country life project.



Digging up potatoes is another exciting experience for the kids—something undreamt-of in their city life.

Camp fire is another delightful experience for the city-bred children.





A village woman helps entertain the young immigrants.



Youngers preparing for a hike

Continued from Page 28

care. They get together every evening to review the day's activities and study the program for the following day. On the eve of the ascent of the Northern Japan Alps, for example, they checked the conditions of each child and told those found unfit for the venture to stay behind.

"Contemporary children don't know how to try their best," commented Yoshikazu Minagawa, a primary school teacher who served as instructor at Yasaka, "because they are pampered and spoiled with too much care from their parents and teachers. They lose the opportunity to try and, therefore, give up easily.

"Here, in this village, we let them try hard to the best of their ability. This is why we included the ascent of the Northern Japan Alps as a highlight of our field activity program.

"Because they don't know the limits of their own ability, they often cannot stop once they go into action. For example, they continue to walk in the rain and develop a high fever later. After going through our training program, they realize the limits of their physical strength and learn when to stop. That's a good experience for them."

Misao Makino, a senior high school teacher and another instructor, said:

"We teach the children how to make bamboo wares with knives. Although we give them careful instructions, a few cut their fingers. It cannot be helped. It's a part of the training and we believe the experience will stand them in good stead in the future. We hope their parents will understand."

Starting this year, two new sites have been added to Sodateru Kai's training grounds — a dairy farm in Hokkaido and an uninhabited island in the Bay of Ise, Mie Prefecture.

Pyrotechnic Gala at Habikino

Photos by Masamichi Sumiyoshi

One sultry evening last summer, 250,000 people converged on the undulating hills of Habikino in the southern suburbs of Osaka. They were there to watch the annual fireworks display — by far the most elaborate pyrotechnic extravaganza in the world.

The midsummer gala, starting with multi-hued fireworks show at dusk, continued for about two hours. Altogether, 117,000 pieces of fireworks costing ¥250 million were set off in quick succession. Some of the larger fireworks shot up high into the dark sky measured 800 meters in diameter and depicted flowers such as the chrysanthemum, dahlia and peony 1,000 meters above the ground.

Also shown were 52 pieces of set fireworks. Especially spectacular was a floral curtain stretching 1,000 meters, which was formed by thousands of pyrotechnic explosions. When ignited electrically, the fireworks shot up into the sky with a roar of cracking sounds, spreading a giant multi-hued curtain of sparks.

Another spectacle was the ''Niagara,'' a huge waterfall of silvery sparks created by fireworks hung from a 1,000-meter-long wire stretched 40 meters above the ground by five 100-ton traveling cranes. The whole show was accompanied by commemorative symphonic music broadcast from a huge speaker tower with studio power output of 2,500 watts.

The event was sponsored by Perfect Liberty (PL) Kyodan, a religious organization with its national headquarters on the hilly terrain near the City of Tondabayashi. The show has been held every summer since 1953. But why does a religious group sponsor a fireworks display?

''When I die, celebrate my death with a fireworks display,'' the late founder of the PL Kyodan, Tokuharu Miki, used to say, ''because my demise will trigger a worldwide propagation of my teachings.''

The first PL pyrotechnic show was held in Matsuyama, Shikoku, in 1953 on the occasion of the PL founder's 15th death anniversary. Since 1954, the midsummer gala has been held annually at the present site of the PL headquarters, expanding in scope year after year. Today, the event is well known not only by the 2 million PL followers but almost throughout Japan.

The PL fireworks are, so to speak, a latter-day revival of Japan's time-honored pyrotechnic tradition, which dates back to the closing years of the 17th century. Literature of another century alludes extensively to the grand fireworks displays which used to be held every summer along the banks of Tokyo's Sumida River. Even among contemporary Tokyoites, there are many in their 40's and 50's who reminisce nostalgically over the Sumida pyrotechnic show, which was suspended in 1962 due to increasing traffic congestion and resultant hazards. *(M.I.)*



Fireworks in memory of the PL Church's founder heralded the evening program of Japan's largest pyrotechnic event. Seen in the foreground is the church's Main Hall.





A New Role for Lowly Tofu

By Shinobu Sunaga

Tofu, the bean curd invented in China two millenia ago, is getting a serious second look these days as the world faces prospects of a growing population and food shortage in the years and decades ahead.

For, this humble food item, has everything going in its favor. It is inexpensive, nutritious and easy to make.

It is easily digestible and has a low content of cholesterol-inducing substances.

It can be cooked in many ways, either singly or in combination with other ingredients. *Tofu* boasts numerous recipes; a Western researcher asserts that he has prepared and enjoyed no less than 1,200 different *tofu* dishes over a period of three years.

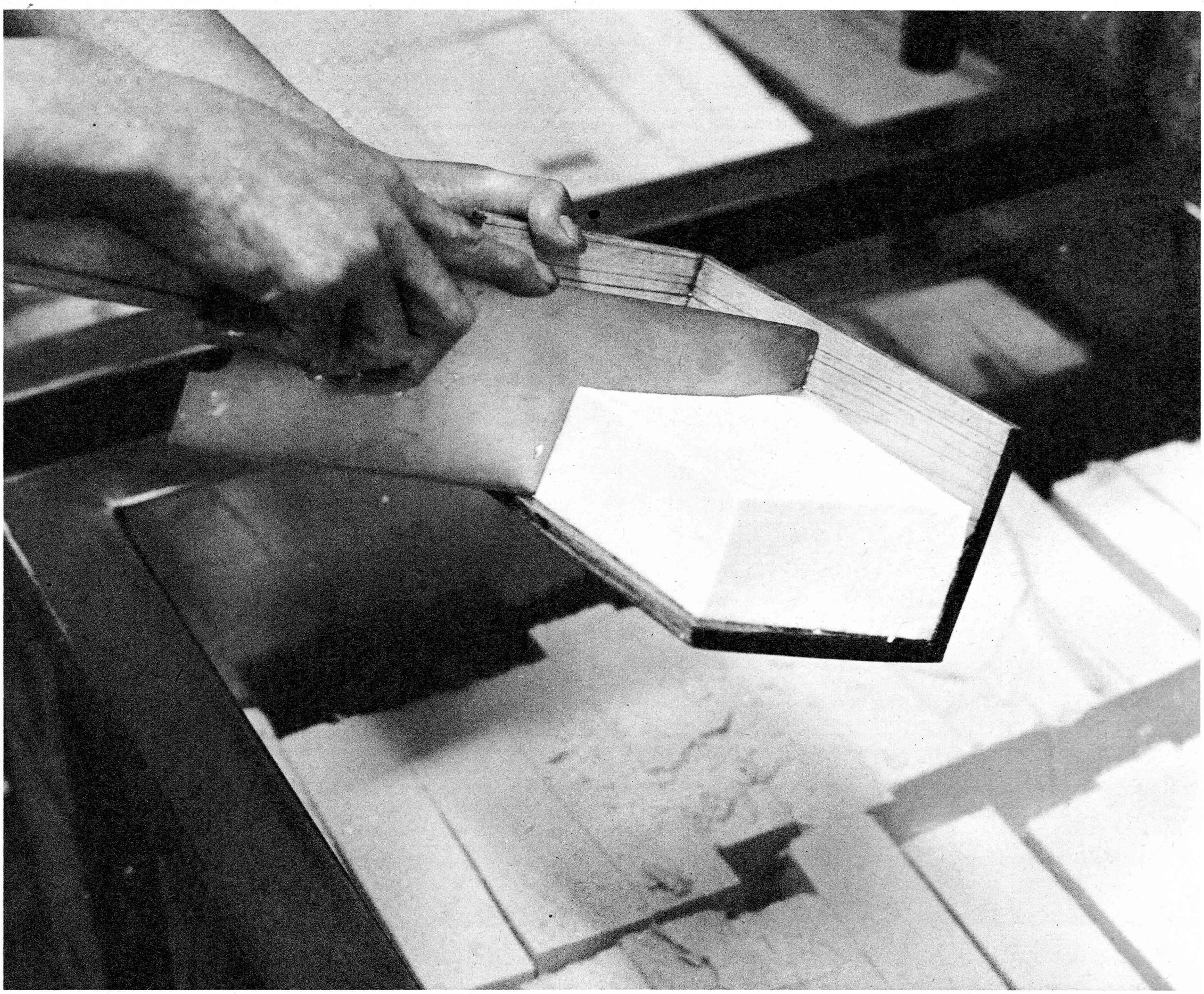
Tofu found its way into Japan from China about 1,000 years ago. At first, the Chinese method of making *tofu* of a rather firm texture was followed but in due course a formula befitting the local climate and quality of water was developed. It has been and remains one of the commonest and most popular food in Japan.

Snow-white and very soft, *tofu* would crumble even at the light push of a finger tip. Very simple in flavor, *tofu* is boiled, grilled or fried, and flavored with diverse seasonings — especially, soy sauce and *miso* or bean paste, both made also from soybeans.

Theoretically, the manufacture of *tofu* is a very simple process. It is made by grinding and boiling water-soaked soybeans, straining out the bean grounds and curdling the remaining mushy liquid with a solidifier.

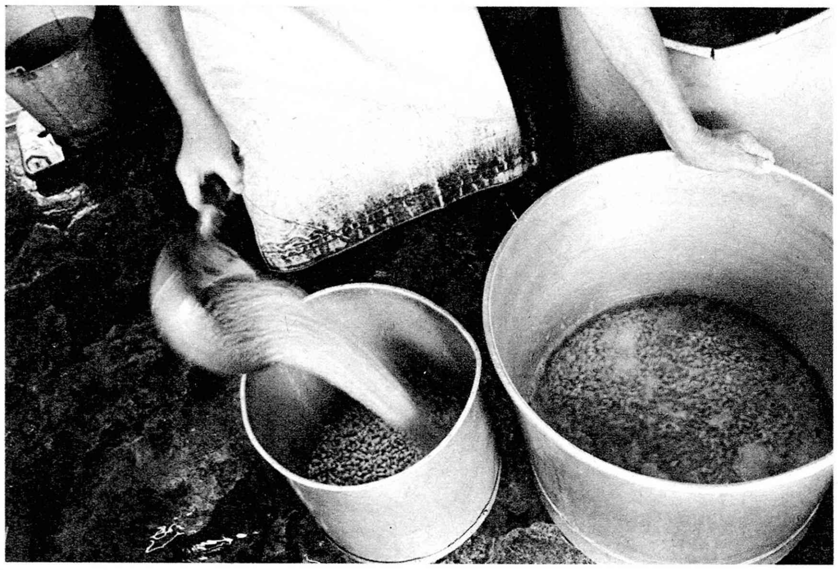


''Hiya-yakko,'' the most popular summertime accompaniment of sake

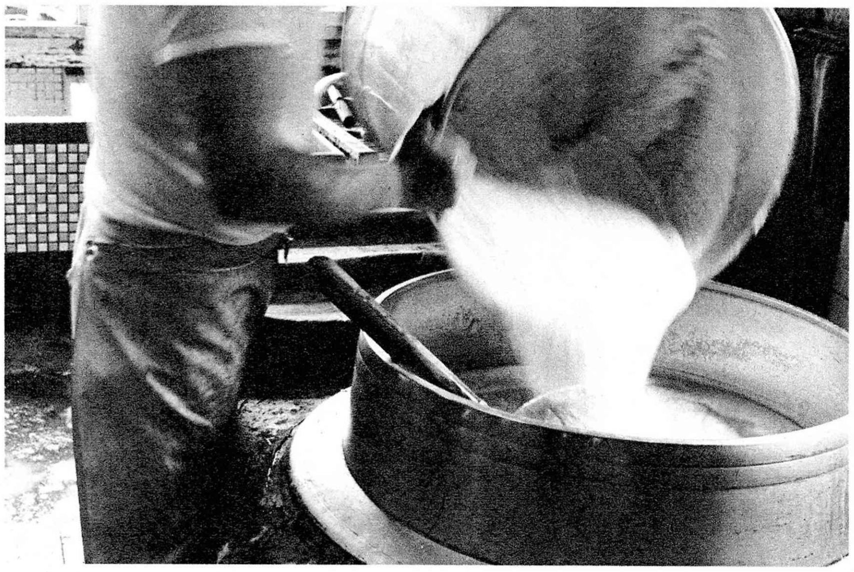


''Kinugoshi-dofu'' being cut with a peculiar tofu-cutting knife

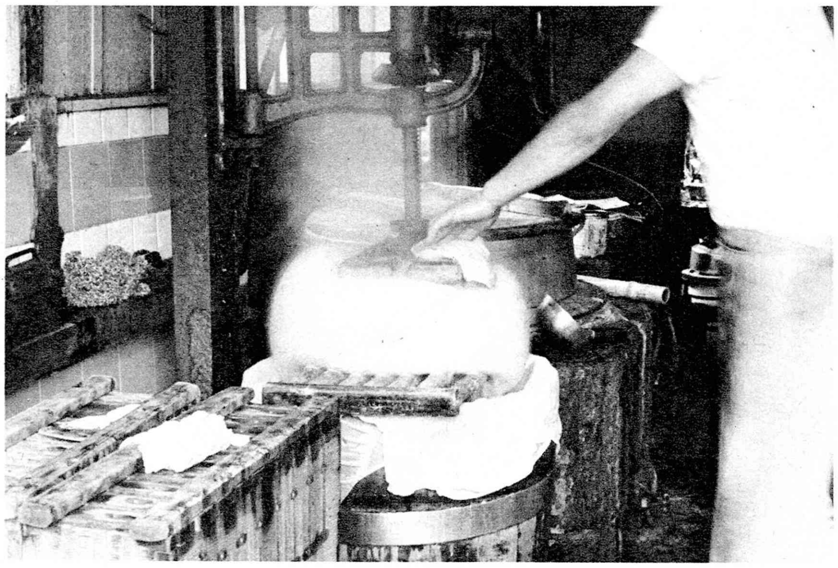
Photos by Japan Illustrated



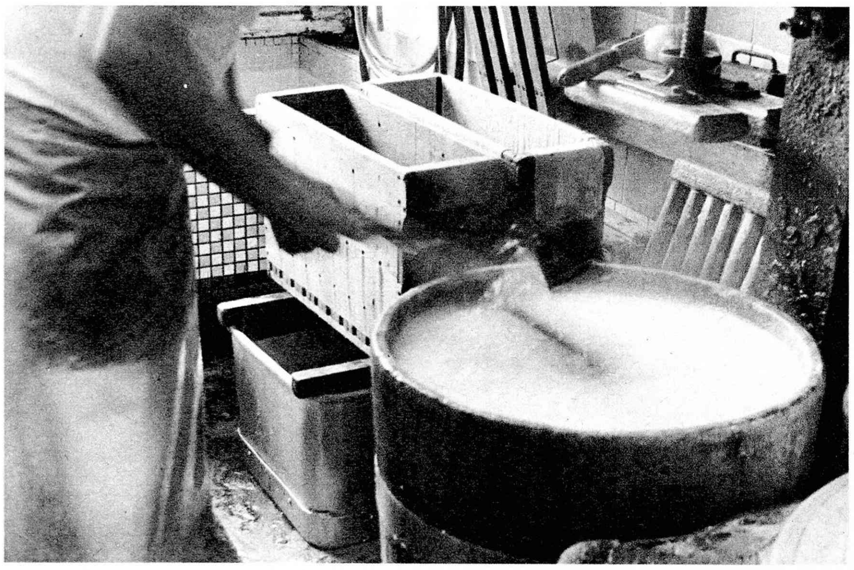
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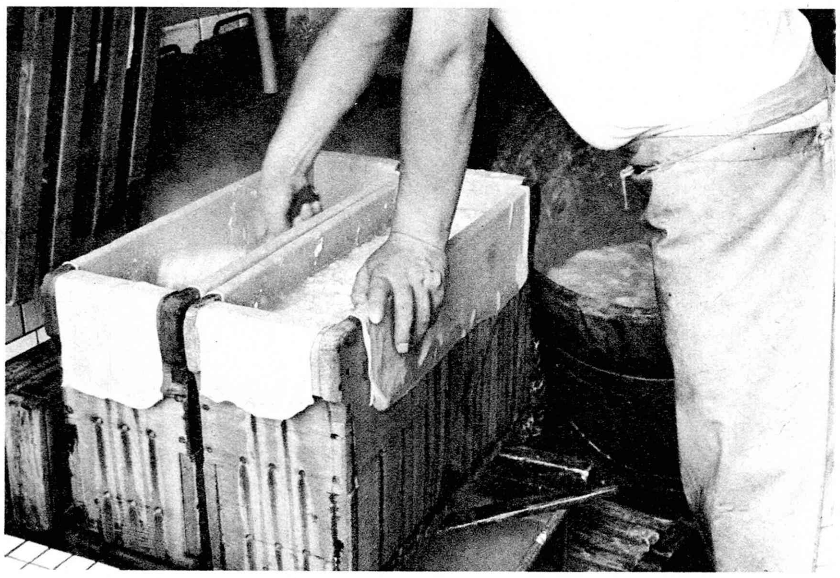
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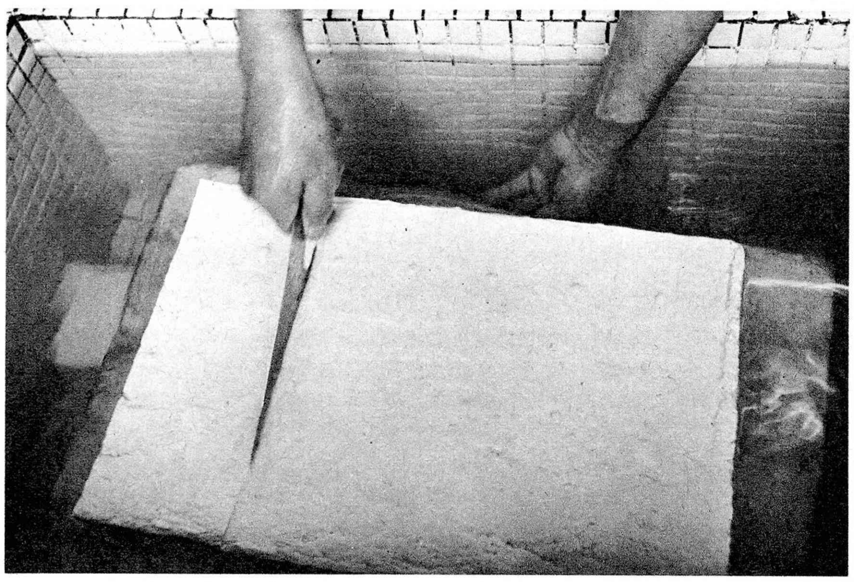
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How *Tofu* Is Made

Tofu, with an 85-per-cent water content, goes bad easily. Therefore, it is usually made early in the morning and consumed within the day.

(1) First, soybeans are soaked in water three to four times the volume of the beans for seven to eight hours in summer and about 20 hours in winter. Then, they are crushed by the grinder.

(2) The soybean puree thus made is diluted with water about five to six times the volume of the original soybeans and boiled for about 20 minutes. (3) The mush is put in a nylon bag and squeezed hard by a press. After the juice, called soymilk, is squeezed out, the bean grounds are separated. (4) When the temperature of soymilk drops to 70 to 75 degrees C, a solidifier, dissolved in lukewarm water, is added. In the past, *nigari* (chlorides) was used as the solidifier but nowadays many *tofu* makers use calcium sulphate.

At the Koyanagi Tofu Shop where the above photos were taken, *nigari* and calcium sulphate are used half and half. The soymilk is slowly stirred around with a wooden paddle several times and then left to stand for about 10 minutes. The purpose is to give a homogeneously smooth texture to the *tofu.*

Next, a large bamboo colander is placed into the curdling barrel. The colander fills with whey, which is ladled off. (5) The soymilk curds are ladled into settling boxes, which are each lined with a square piece of cotton cloth. After the soymilk curds are put in, the edges of the cloth are folded over the top of the curds. Then a bamboo pressing mat and a wooden pressing lid are put atop the cloth and a weight is placed on the lid. The curds are thus pressed for 20 minutes during which time water drips through the draining holes bored at the bottom and sides of the box. (6) Taken out of the draining box, the large chunk of *tofu* is then cut into pieces of standard size.

Continued on Page 37



Shown above is the eight-dish set of tofu cuisine served at Sasa-no-yuki Restaurant in downtown Tokyo. The "ankake-dofu" contained in the twin plates in the foreground is the specialty of the shop. The "yuzu-miso-dofu" (flavored with citron miso) is placed in the center of the front row. The other dishes are all seasoned with soy sauce. The "Kuya-dofu" is served hot in the cup with the lid. Left to right in the middle row: The "chirimushi-dofu," shown enlarged at right, includes a thick piece of tofu, slices of white fish fillet and lemon and an egg. The small blue bowl contains boiled tofu, chicken meat, mushroom and minced leek. The "iri-dofu" is cooked by scrambling broken tofu with egg, mushroom, bamboo shoot, chicken meat and green peas. Dishes in the background: In the vermilion lacquerware are boiled "yuba" and "Koya-dofu." The "goma-dofu" at left-top is a kind of custard made of powdered sesame seeds and starch. It contains no soybean curd.



Continued from Page 35

Before the advent of synthetic fibers, the mush of ground and boiled soybeans used to be placed in a cotton bag and pressed with a pole to squeeze out soymilk. *Tofu* made by this process was called *momen-dofu* (cotton cloth *tofu*). About 10 *tofu* cakes are made from one kilogram of soybeans.

There is another variety called *kinugoshi-dofu.* Though limited in the volume of output compared with *momen-dofu,* it is liked by many people because of its velvety texture. *Kinu* means silk, and *goshi* strained, but this does not mean that the soybean mush is strained with a silk cloth. Rather, when the soybean puree is boiled, a smaller amount of water is added than is the case with *momen-dofu.* Moreover, the soymilk treated with the solidifier is ladled into settling boxes without draining holes and left to curdle without using any weight. Typical of *kinugoshi-dofu* recipes is *ankake-dofu* (warmed *kinugoshi* with *ankake* sauce). Sasa-no-yuki, a *tofu* restaurant of old standing in Tokyo, is famous for this recipe.

High Nutritive Value

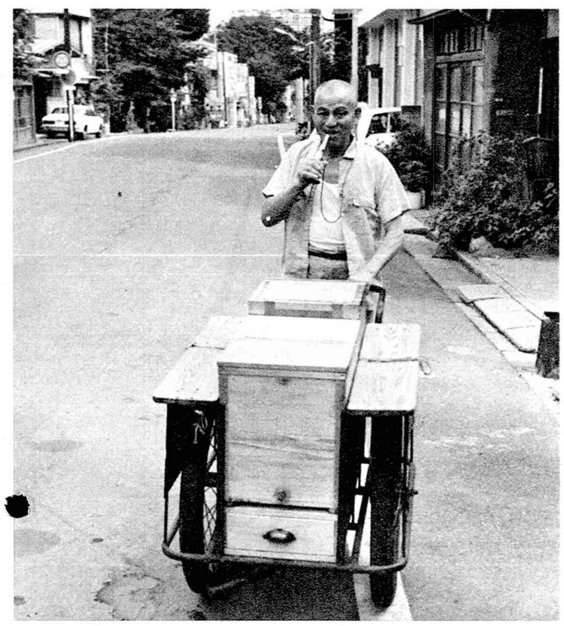
Soybeans, the main ingredient of *tofu,* are so rich in protein that they are dubbed *hatake-no-niku* or meat of the fields. They also contain much calcium and phosphorus. The ingredients of 100 grams of *tofu* are shown below:

	Water	Protein	Calcium	Phos-phorus
Momen-dofu	84.3	8.4 g.	118 mg.	103 mg.
Kinugoshi-dofu	85.6	7.3	165	89

Source: Tokyo Tofu and Aburage Union

One cake of *tofu* sold at *tofu* shops weighs about 300 grams. Therefore, one can take in 22 to 25 grams of protein by eating a cake of *tofu.*

In olden times when Buddhism flourished in Japan, people did not eat the meat of four-footed animals but could take relatively well-balanced nourishments because protein-rich soybean products containing essential amino acids — *tofu, miso* and soy sauce — were extensively consumed along with rice, vegetables and fish. It was not until the Meiji Period (the latter half of the 19th century) that the Japanese people in general began to eat the meat of quadruped animals.



A tofu-vendor makes the round of his district, announcing his arrival with a special horn peculiar to his trade.

Tofu is cheap, highly nutritious, very soft and easily digestible. It is a suitable diet for children and old people as well as the sick and has been popular among people of all strata of society from olden times. *Tofu* has thus taken such deep roots in the daily life of the populace that there are many proverbs and expressions containing the word *tofu.* Examples: *Tofu ni kasugai.* (It's like trying to fasten two cakes of *tofu* with a cramp.) This phrase refers to futile efforts. *Tofu no kado ni atama o butsukete shindeshimae* (Kill yourself by ramming your head against an edge of *tofu*!) — a good-humored abuse uttered to a dull-witted person.

Tofu Dishes

While the exact date of *tofu's* introduction into Japan is unknown, it is recorded that it was first adopted in *shojin-ryori* — the vegetarian diet of Zen sect priests made of only cereals and vegetables. Later, with the development of *sado* (tea ceremony), *tofu* also made its appearance in *kaiseki-ryori* — a meal served before tea ceremony.

Tofu plays important and varied roles in the Japanese cuisine. The book entitled "Tofu Hyakuchin" (100 Delicious Dishes of *Tofu*), which was published in Osaka in 1782, is still valued as a Japanese cooking classic.

In the Edo Period, *tofu dengaku* was popular at *tofu* restaurants before *kinugoshi-dofu* was created. It was made by grilling thin skewered *tofu* slices and spreading both surfaces with a thin coating of *miso* sauce and broiling them well. The above mentioned cook book depicts sprucely dressed young women cutting *tofu* to the accompaniment of *shamisen* music in front of *tofu* restaurants in Kyoto and Osaka.

Following are principal *tofu* recipes in present-day Japan:

Hiya-yakko (chilled *tofu*) — *Tofu* is cut into *yakko* (3-centimeter cubes) and chilled in cold water, preferably with ice cubes floating. It is eaten after being dipped in soy sauce mixed with such condiments as minced leek, dried bonito shavings and grated ginger-root. This is a very popular *tofu* recipe for the summer.

Yudofu (simmering *tofu*) — *Tofu* is also cut into *yakko* and placed in a pan filled with boiling water with one or two sheets of tangle spread at the bottom. Lightly boiled *tofu* is dipped in soy sauce with dried bonito flakes and other condiments. Sometimes, greens and codfish fillets are also placed in the boiling water to enhance the taste.

Tofu dengaku — This traditional way of cooking *tofu,* as explained earlier, is marked by the appetizing fragrance of broiled *miso.*

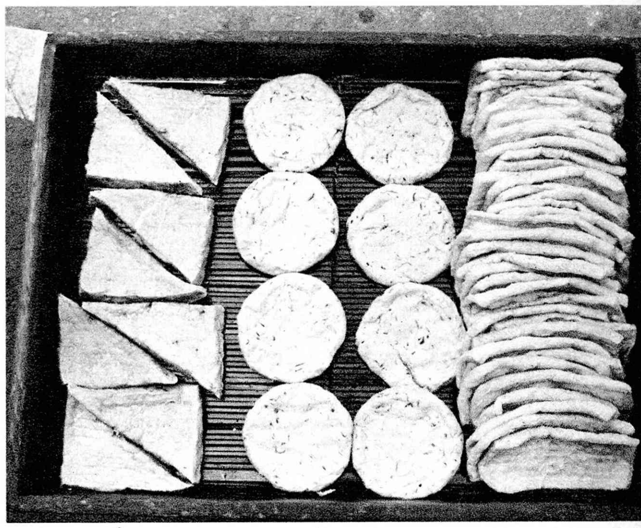
Nabemono (pot dishes) — *Tofu* is cooked with other ingredients in a variety of *nabemono* including *sukiyaki* (beef and vegetables), *mizutaki* (chicken or fish with vegetables) and other traditional pot dishes peculiar to each region. *Tofu* is cooked well so that the broth may soak into it.

Tofu as soup ingredient — *Tofu* is popular as an ingredient of *miso* soup and various kinds of *wanmono* (soup in bowl), such as clear and *miso*-based soup.

Tofu is not only cut into various forms for cooking as explained above but also broken into very small pieces and mixed with various other foods for cooking or steaming.

Yaki-dofu or *tofu* grilled over charcoal fire is also a popular ingredient of pot dishes. *Koya-dofu* — *tofu* frozen and then dried — can be preserved for a long time. It is soaked in water and reconstituted when needed for pot dishes and other types of cooking.

Aburage — sliced and drained *tofu* deep-fried in oil — is cooked together with soy sauce and sweetened sake for placing on a bowl of wheat or buckwheat noodle. Fried *tofu* thus cooked also can be stuffed with boiled and vinegared rice to make *inarizushi* (*sushi* rice in *aburage* pouches). Meanwhile, *nama-age* (thick *aburage*), when broiled and sprinkled with grated radish and soy sauce, makes an impromptu dish rich in fat and protein.



Fried tofu varieties: (left to right) "nama-age," "gan-modoki" and "aburage."

When the soymilk produced in the process of *tofu* making is boiled, a thin film forms on the surface. *Yuba* — a variant of *tofu* — is made by scooping up and drying this film. *Yuba,* which is preservable for a long time, can be used as a delicious ingredient of both *miso* and clear soup or in various other dishes.

English-language books are now available to readers interested in gaining a more detailed knowledge of the *tofu* cuisine, including not only the Japanese but also Western ways of *tofu* cooking. Among these books are "The Book of Tofu" (by William Shurtleff and Akiko Aoyagi) published in the United States, and "Rice Paddy Gourmet" (by Joan Itoh) put out by the The Japan Times, Ltd.

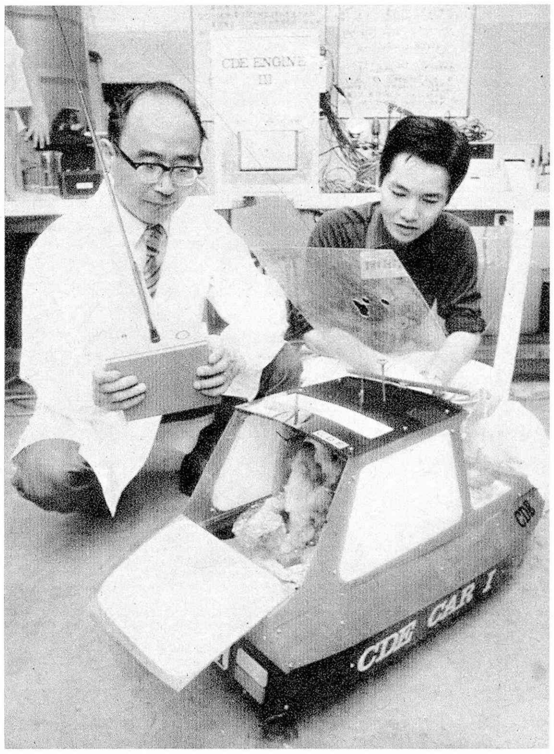
At a time when a food crisis is feared with the continuous swelling of the world population, *tofu,* made from soybeans which are far superior to beef, a secondary product, in terms of per-acre output and rich in nutritive value, is attracting increasing attention as a promising future source of protein.

Meanwhile, in the food-rich U.S. and European countries where meat is consumed in vast quantities, a growing number of people suffering from adult diseases are showing keen interest in diets centered on *tofu* and vegetables, as evidenced by the growing popularity of "macrobiotic" and vegetarian restaurants.

In recent years, *tofu* shops and *tofu* restaurants have cropped up in major American and European cities. Meanwhile, a major Japanese manufacturer, mass-producing 50,000 cakes of *tofu* daily, is exporting a large quantity of this unique Japanese food to the U.S.

Current Topics

Professor Bares Engine That Runs on Water



Plain water and sea water react with each other to produce heat.

This principle has been put to work by a Tokyo Institute of Technology scientist recently in the development of an experimental engine.

In principle, it is possible to use the thermal water of a nuclear reactor as an inexhaustible source of energy, according to the scientist, Prof. Naoji Isshiki.

The system consists of a tank containing a 1.5 liter solution of calcium chloride and lithium chloride and a smaller tank holding 600 cc. of plain water.

The smaller tank is immersed in the large tank which is heated up to 150 C., initially with conventional fuel, to augment the heat-producing chemical reaction.

When heated, the plain water gives off steam, which turns the steam engine before it is drawn back to the larger tank to enhance the chemical reaction and the production of heat.

This process is repeated until the chemical solution is diluted by the steam to the point of causing no more reaction.

At that point, the solution is enriched with an addition of chemicals to reinvigorate the heat-creating activity.

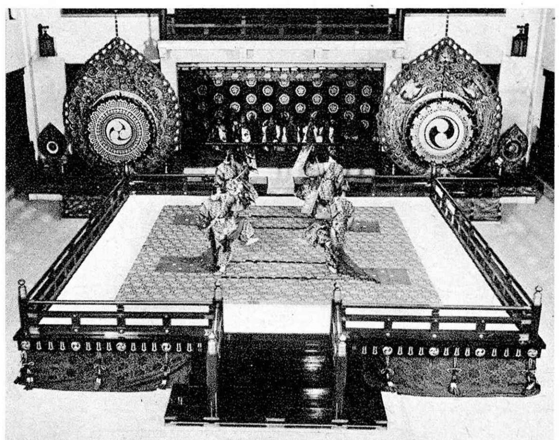
For an experiment, the system was mounted on a radio-controlled toy car which ran for 20 minutes at a speed of 15 kilometers an hour.

Isshiki has also succeeded in making a 10-watt generating system and plans to make another with an output capacity of one kilowatt.

Photo: Prof. Naoji Isshiki (left) at Tokyo Institute of Technology and his assistant show a toy car with a steam engine which draws energy from a chemical solution.

Japan's Classical Performing Arts Presented in Europe

Three Japanese missions are now touring Europe to present three types of classical performing arts—*gagaku* (Imperial court music and dance), Noh drama and *bunraku* puppet plays—under a program sponsored by the Japan Foundation. The groups, comprising the cream of actors and players in each field, have been dispatched by the Gagaku Department of the Imperial Household Agency's Board of the Ceremonies, the Zeamiza (Noh) and the Bunraku Association.



Gagaku, Noh and *bunraku* are representative of Japan's traditional performing arts. *Gagaku* has continued to be played as Imperial court music and dance for well over 1,000 years now. Meanwhile, Noh (including *Kyogen* comic interlude) established its highly refined styles and esthetics as far back as the 14th century, whereas *bunraku* achieved paramount techniques as a puppet play in the 18th century. The current presentations of these classical arts are receiving keen interest among the Europeans.

The present performance tours are being conducted according to schedules independently worked out by the three respective sectors. The schedules include a joint performance of *gagaku* and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in West Berlin, and the presentations of Noh and *bunraku* in Eastern Europe.

During the present performance tours, *gagaku* is being presented 20 times in eight countries, Noh 23 times in five countries, and *bunraku* 27 times in seven countries. The *gagaku* mission will return home early in November. The Noh and *bunraku* troupes will conclude their tours around October 10.

English Edition of Illustrated Story on A-Bomb Calamity Published

An English edition of the illustrated book on the atomic bomb catastrophe titled "PIKA-DON" has been published recently with a view to impressing the world with the horrors of nuclear weapons on the basis of actual experience in World War II. The book was first published in 1950 by Iri Maruki and his wife Toshi, both painters, who lost many of their kith and kin in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in 1945. The new English edition is published by Roba-no-Mimi (Donkey's Ear) Co.

The English version is a booklet measuring 16 by 15.5 cm., which contains a total of 63 pictures. Its title "PIKA-DON" is a Japanese word for expressing the flash and sound of A-bomb blast.

The Marukis have persistently appealed for world peace by drawing a series of pictures depicting the horrible aftermath of the atomic bombing in Hiroshima under the title of "Genbaku-no-Zu" (Pictures of Atomic Bombing). At present, they are in Europe to prepare for paintings on the theme of the Auschwitz tragedy.



Antique Gun Replicas Save Firm

A harpoon gun manufacturer in Yokohama thrives on making and exporting imitation antique guns, thanks partly to the popular interest in 18th-century firearms generated by the U.S. Bicentennial.

Miroku Seiki Seisakusho in Yokohama this year is producing about 4,000 antique gun replicas per month — up 30 per cent from 1975. About 60 employees including part-time women workers have been working even on holidays in the factory.

In 1970 Miroku was in such a position that it had to decide whether to go into a new line of business or go under because stiff restraints imposed on Japan's whaling since 1966 drastically reduced the demand for harpoon guns.



On a tip from an exporter it dealt with, the shop shifted to the manufacture of replicas of antique guns for export to the U.S. Initially, 20 replicas of a British handgun were made on a trial basis.

After getting favorable response for these replicas, the manager of the firm, Ken Okamoto, got into the new line in earnest. He ordered production of antique guns that were used in the U.S., Britain and France before 1863.

Miroku successfully used the workers' skills developed over the years in making harpoon guns for producing replicas of antique guns, including the Winchester and Kentucky rifles.

The company now estimates that sales will go up to ¥400 million this year. Okamoto finds it ironical that the U.S., a principal campaigner against whaling, which caused his company to suffer a drop in business, is now ''making it up'' by providing the market for the new product.

Peptide Synthesis Promises Wide Uses

A group of researchers has claimed that a simple method of synthesizing peptide which promises wide uses as an ingredient of sweetener, medicine and farm chemical has been developed.

Scientists at the Sagami Central Chemical Institute in Sagamihara, Kanagawa Prefecture, said their method has a number of advantages over the conventional method of chemical synthesis.

The newly-developed method which uses enzyme permits (1) synthesis in room temperature and under standard atmospheric pressure, (2) high yields and end products with less impurity, (3) production without giving off pollutants and (4) production at low costs.

The credit for the success goes to Yoshikazu Isowa and Muneki Omori, both chief researchers, and other staff members of the institute.

They said a number of chemical firms are preparing for industrialization of their method.

Using the method, the group has succeeded in making a sweetener which is 100 to 200 times as sweet as natural sugar.

The group has also synthesized a derivative which has the effect of raising blood pressure.

It is also possible to make a variety of peptide by combining enzyme with amino acids in various ways.

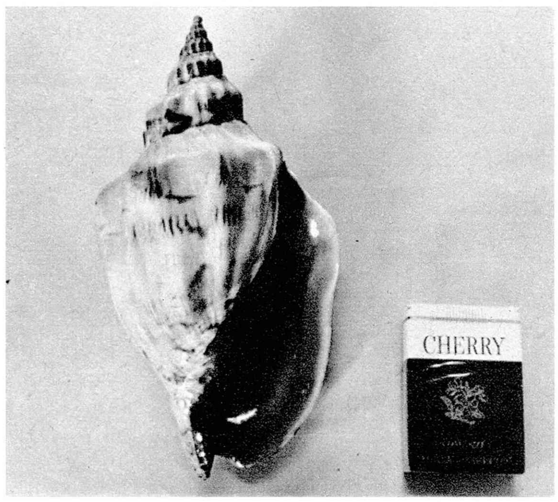
The low production costs made possible by the new method will open up wide uses of the chemical for medicine, food additives and farm chemicals, the group has claimed.

Rare Conch Shell Acquired

A 22-centimeter-long shell of conch, claimed to be the largest among the 10 existing varieties of rare shellfish known as festilyria festiva, was recently put on public display at Toba Aquarium at Toba, Mie Prefecture, located close to Mikimoto Pearl Island.

The museum recently purchased this rare specimen from its owner, Vic Chakowa, a shell collector of Mauritius, for $5,000. He came to Japan in early June to make the deal. He claimed that the shellfish was caught by a fisherman off Mozambique in 1973.

Since the first specimen was discovered 165 years ago, only 10 conches have been caught. Five of their shells are in the U.S., two others in Europe and the remaining three in Japan.



Single Men Prefer Pachinko; Women Like Driving: Survey

A Government survey of unmarried salaried workers indicates that the Japanese pinball game called *pachinko* is a favorite pastime of men. On the other hand, a majority of single working women indicated a preference for driving as their favorite form of recreation.

Of leisure activities, the survey released recently by the Economic Planning Agency showed a male penchant for age-old indoor games and woman's fondness of traveling.

ESTABLISHMENTS THAT ARE THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Current Topics

Among activities listed as favorites by men were; mahjongg, driving and cycling and horse races. Women listed sight-seeing trips, *pachinko,* mountain climbing and hiking as their preferences.

As of May 1976, monthly take-home pay averaged ¥88,500 (¥95,600 for males and ¥78,200 for females).

Of the total, ¥12,000 per month was spent on the average for cultural activities and amusements.

Mirror-Clock



Sharp Corporation has placed on the market a battery-operated mirror-clock. The Sharp Quartz CT-407 may look like an ordinary desk-top mirror but with a touch on the switch, it turns into a digital clock.

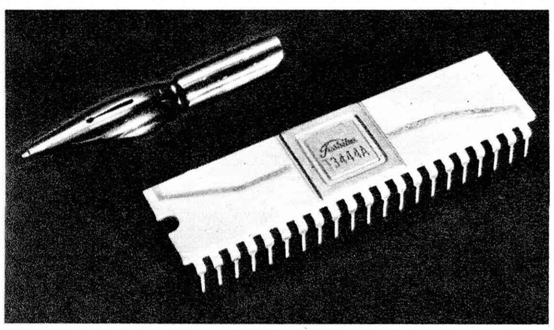
Priced at ¥65,000, it is available at department stores as well as interior decorating shops.

Micro Computer

An ultra micro-computer featuring the large-scale integration circuit (LSI) has been put on sale by Tokyo Shibaura Electric Co. (Toshiba).

To be priced at ¥7,000 per unit, the ultra micro-computer can be installed on various home electric appliances allowing a wide variety of computer-programmed operation in daily living.

The heart of the computer — the LSI — measures 5.58 by 4.10 mm. The performance of



the LSI is equal to that of 12,000 conventional transistors, Toshiba claims.

When set on a sewing-machine, the computer will make it possible to do any type of automatic sewing according to the preprogrammed pattern. The LSI-controlled washing machine can be effectively operated according to the material and thickness of cloth or degree of strains.

Solar Clock



Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. has recently put on sale an outdoor clock that operates on solar energy. Dubbed Solar Clock, the clock has a solar cell composed of 18 silicone elements, each of which has a generating capacity of 0.4 volt.

Generated electricity is stored in a battery and is used to power a crystal oscillator. The solar battery has a power output twice as much as is required to power the clock. The excess power is stored in the battery to prepare the clock literally for a rainy day.'' The battery has the capacity to store enough power to keep the clock operating for a month without a recharge.

The clock's face is on an 80 by 80 cm. square propped up by a four-meter-long support. It is claimed to be suitable for installation at a park or a school playground. It costs ¥600,000 inclusive of the installation cost.

Combination Unit



Victor Co. of Japan has put on sale a portable radio-TV-cassette recorder triplex combination called ''Ratecase 77,'' priced at ¥67,800.

The 3-band radio (FM, AM, SW) operates via a selective switch, while the TV unit, equipped with a 3-inch monochrome screen, operates on both VHF and UHF. Recordings from both the radio and TV can be made by using a single non-contact electronic tuning switch.

The complete unit also features a special ''reversal'' switch which allows projection of the same image on the ''second screen'' installed on the opposite side of the unit.

Victor plans to export the model sometime this autumn.

Mini-Taperecorder

Olympus Optical Industry Co. has put on sale a micro cassette taperecorder, Pearl Corder SD, which is claimed to be easy to handle and superb in performance.

The new product is equipped with an automatic shutoff apparatus and an ejection device — the first to be so equipped for a product of this size.




SEIKO
QUARTZ
SEIKO
WED 2
QUARTZ
4004
SEIKO
QUARTZ LC
CHRONOGRAPH
LAP
RESET
SET
LIGHT
START
STOP
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